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Classificatory violence: difference, discipline, and (de)gradation in Uganda's northern Albertine Rift, c.1860 to c.1991

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2020

ABSTRACT

This thesis traces the connections between ethnicity, hierarchy, and punishment on a Ugandan periphery. Focusing on an area known as Bugungu in the lowland northern-western littoral of Bunyoro, this study explores a colonial optic that ordered ethnic subjects not only horizontally and spatially through division and agglomeration, but also vertically by ascribing places in a civilisational hierarchy. This study advances the concept of ethno-civilisationalism to encapsulate this mode of thought and practice. Adopted by the British partly as a matter of expedience and economy, this approach offered opportunities for colonial subjects to assert or advance their own rank, drawing on their own prior versions of inter-ethnic hierarchy. Shifting the focus from the violence of classification to violence as classification, this thesis posits that ethnic difference and hierarchy was primarily inscribed in colonial Africa through what is here termed 'collectivising punishment' – punishment of, or calibrated for, particular collectives on the basis of stereotypes. Colonialism constituted a project of discipline and rank as well as one of divide and rule. Based on archival and oral sources, this thesis looks to the peripheries of a colonial territory where the British at times outsourced the business of empire – including punishment – to what they saw as 'more civilised' African ethnic sub-colonials, instead of adopting Indirect Rule. The thesis traces the evolution, contestation, and internalisation of these ideas and practices within states and society over a period of 130 years, spanning the pre-colonial and post-colonial eras.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE/ORGANISATIONAL

ADC	Assistant District Commissioner
AEIC	African & European Investment Co. Ltd
BaCA	Bagungu Community Association
BOSA	Bugungu (or Bagungu) Outside Students Association
BUA	Bugungu (or Bagungu) United Association
CHA	Controlled Hunting Area
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CS	Chief Secretary
DC	District Commissioner ('District Collector' before 1912).
DP	Democratic Party
DCWND	District Commissioner West Nile District
KUR&H	Kenya and Uganda Railways & Harbours
MFNP	Murchison Falls National Park
NiP	Nile Province
NP	Northern Province
Sokimo	*Société Minière de Kilo-Moto*
SPFE	Society for the Preservation of the (Wild) Fauna of the Empire
PC	Provincial Commissioner (Sub-Commissioner before 1912)
PCNP	Provincial Commissioner for Northern Province
UNILO	United Nations International Labour Organisation
UNP	Uganda National Parks
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
WND	West Nile District

PUBLICATIONS

ARGD	*Annual Report of the Game Department*
ARGFD	*Annual Report of the Game & Fisheries Department*
ARPC	*Annual report of the Provincial Commissioners*
AMSR	*Annual Medical and Sanitary Report*
AMWF	*The African Missions of the White Fathers*
BdSGI	*Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana*
BdSdGdE	*Bulletin de la Société de géographie d'Égypte*
BTSGKC	*Bulletin trimestriel de la Société khédiviale de géographie du Caire*
CMI	*Church Missionary Intelligencer*
CSHS	*Comparative Studies in Society and History*
EPCA	*Emin Pasha in Central Africa*
GJ	*The Geographical Journal*
IJAHS	*International Journal of African Historical Studies*
JAH	*Journal of African History*
JEAS	*Journal of Eastern African Studies*
JICH	*Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*
JRAI	*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*
JSPWFE	*Journal for the Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of the Empire*
MN	*Mengo Notes*
PGM	*Petermann's Geographische Mitteilungen*

PRGS	*Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*
PRSE	*Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*,
RSSCRS	*Reports of the Sleeping Sickness Commission of the Royal Society*
RATUNP	*Reports and Accounts of the Trustees of Uganda National Parks*
SNR	*Sudan Notes and Records*
SPFEJ	*Society for Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire Journal*
UCR	*Uganda Church Review*
UJ	*Uganda Journal*

ARCHIVES

AA	Archives Africaines
A.G.M.Afr.	Archivio Generale dei Missionari d'Africa
AIMO	*Affaires Indigenes & Main d'Oeuvre*
BL	British Library
BPA	British Petroleum Archive
BTB2	Bujenje Touring Book Vol. 2
BTB3	Bujenje Touring Books Vol. 3
CKP	Cosmas Kato Papers
CRL	Cadbury Research Library
CRLs	Centre for Research Libraries
CS	Chief Secretary
CUA	Church of Uganda Archives
CUL	Cambridge University Library
EISP	Edward I. Steinhart Papers
GDA	Gulu District Archives
HAD	Hoima District Archives
HIA	Hoover Institution Archives
HWCEAP	The Humphrey Winterton Collection of East African Photographs
IWMA	Imperial War Museum Archives
JWP	Justin Willis Papers
JMP	John Mills Papers
JWP	Justin Willis Papers
KDA	Kabarole District Archive
LSA	Linnean Society Archive
LSHTMA	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Archives
MDA	Masindi District Archives
MJHLAS	Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies
MULAS	Makerere University Library Africana Section
NUA	Northwestern University Archives
NHMA	Natural History Museum Archives
ONHMA	Oxford Natural History Museum Archives
OP	Office of the President
PP	Parliamentary Papers
Prov	Provincial Papers
QENPA	Queen Elizabeth National Park Archive
RAA	Rubaga Archdiocese Archives
RAC	Rockefeller Archive Center
RAI	Royal Anthropological Institute
RAMC	Royal Army Medical Corps archives
RBF	Rockefeller Brothers Fund
RCMSA	Royal Commonwealth Society Archives

RGS	Royal Geographical Society
RHL	Rhodes House Library
RWP	Roger Wheater Papers
SecTop	Secretariat Topical
SDP	Shane Doyle Papers
SHLA	Senate House Library Archives
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
TCDA	Trinity College Dublin Archives
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles.
UFFD	Unyoro Field Force Diary
UNA	Uganda National Archives
UNILOA	United Nations International Labour Organization Archives, Geneva
UKNA	National Archives, UK
WTI	Wellcome Trust Institute

A NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

In the Great Lakes Bantu languages most commonly used in western Uganda, /l/ and /r/ are allophones from a phonological perspective. But in some cases speakers use the linguanymic prefix *Ru-* instead of *Lu-* or vice versa, partly as a means of reinforcing the distinctiveness of linguistic identities. In upland Bunyoro, the /r/ prevails in this regard, hence *Runyoro*; in Bugungu, the /l/ prevails, hence *Lugungu.*

In both these languages one Nyoro is a *Munyoro*, two or more are *Banyoro.* In the interest of simplicity, I omit these prefixes except in the name of the country itself, Bunyoro. For the same reason initial vowel are omitted throughout; thus I write, for example, *mukama* instead of *omukama,* and *basohi* instead of *abasohi* (fishermen).

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To the memory of Michael Joseph Browne (1948-2019).

'a vigorous despotism is in itself the best mode of government for training the people in what is specifically wanting to render them capable of a higher civilization'.[1]

'Punishments are usually heavier in primitive areas such as this where they are needed'.[2]

'The true Banyoro (...) were people like the Bagahya from those sides and not from Bugungu here (...). At *kikonko* (at the escarpment) going those ends those are the ones called the Banyoro, Bagahya. So for us in Bugungu here, for us we are Bagungu but in Bunyoro (...) That is how I understand it'.[3]

'[T]hey thought [us] (...) primitive, arrogant, undisciplined people. I don't think they had very kind words [to say] about Bagungu'.[4]

'The Bagungu are extremely progressive people in every walk of life imaginable (...). They have advanced in education and trade (...) Intermarriage with several Nilotic tribes (...) has resulted in giving the people an appearance and general physical structure which is quite different from that which could be referred to as standard Banyoro (...)'.[5]

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[1] John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, 2nd ed. (London, 1861), p. 329.
[2] 18/12/42, BTB2.
[3] Int. Gungu 21a
[4] Int. Gungu 4c.
[5] Edward Kakongoro, 'Kibiro Salt', unpublished BA dissertation (Makerere College East Africa, 1968), p. 25

INTRODUCTION: *Different strokes for different folks*

Colonial rule involved putting people in their places in terms of imagined 'tribal territories' and *in their place* in terms of positions on an imagined scale of civilisation. This thesis traces the evolution of putative hierarchies of inter-ethnic superiority and inferiority over the course of 130 years in part of what is today Uganda. Spanning the pre-colonial to the post-colonial eras, this study centres on the people known as Gungu in a marginal area known to most for most of this period as 'Bugungu', though it is known as Buliisa District to the current Ugandan government. In the nineteenth century this lowland littoral constituted the western section of the northern borderlands of the historical Great Lakes kingdom of Bunyoro. Known also as 'Magungo' by Lwo-speakers of the region, it was a zone where predominantly Bantu-speaking Bunyoro met the smaller, predominantly Lwo-speaking, ritually subordinate polities of Lake Albert and the upper Albert Nile valley. Since British colonial conquest and rule (1894-1962) Bugungu has also constituted the edge of Uganda, sharing its Lake Albert lacustrine frontier – within the Albertine Rift Valley – with what was to be the Belgian Congo in roughly the same period.

Racial and colonial thinking under British rule relied on the notion of a civilizational hierarchy, not only of races but also of ethnic groups. As racial as it was ethnic, as racialising as it was ethnicising, vertical relations were bound up with ethnic stereotypes, in a mode of thought that is herein termed 'ethno-civilisationalism'. This mode of thought offered colonial rulers a way to order and categorise as well as the potential to employ 'superior' groups to govern 'inferior'.

But it also offered opportunities to colonial subjects to assert or advance their own rank in this hierarchy, drawing often on their own prior versions of ethno-civilisational hierarchy. By focusing on these vertical inter-ethnic relations and not only on the horizontal ordering of 'tribes', the thesis offers a new approach to the nature and effects of colonial Indirect Rule and to the longer history of ethnicity.

These contested assignments and ascriptions, involving both colonisers and colonised, were the work of ethnic stereotyping but also punishment. As such, this study shifts the historiography of ethnicity's focus from the violence *of classification* to violence *as classification*. At the periphery, it was punishment that did considerable ethnological work, often in the shadows of the tribal categories of colonial census schedules. What Connor Cavanagh calls the 'civilizing violence' of colonialism was also classificatory and collectivising.[6] *Collectivising* punishment produced and reproduced collectivities and difference – and the content and boundaries of ethnic identification – through acts of collective punishment but also individual punishment calibrated for particular collectivities according to their putative positions in ethno-civilizational hierarchies. In this way, colonies functioned 'according to a set of changing rules and hierarchies that orders social kinds', to quote Ann Laura Stoler: it was about sorting 'those eligible for recruitment, for subsidized or forced resettlement, for extreme deprivation or privilege, prioritized residence or confinement'.[7] This thesis argues that these *gradations of degradation* were expressed most clearly through the outsourcing of

[6] Connor J. Cavanagh, 'Anthropos into humanitas: Civilizing violence, scientific forestry, and the 'Dorobo question' in eastern Africa', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35, no. 4 (2017), pp. 694-713.
[7] Ann Laura Stoler, 'Colony' in J.M. Bernstein, Adi Ophir, and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon* (New York, 2018), pp. 45-58.

power at the colonial peripheries and interstices. The classic exposition of indirect rule entailed use of 'customary' forms of authority within a society; but in the case of Bugungu, power was delegated to Africans who were explicitly chosen because they were not considered part of the same ethnic group, but were understood as 'more civilized' in a framing that was both ethnic and racializing.

This thesis uses these concepts of ethno-civilisationalism and classificatory violence to help draw connecting lines between several episodes in Bugungu's history. This study illuminates the enduring, consequential nature of collectivizing punishment which, though not without pre-colonial precursors, featured most meaningfully as tools of colonial governance beginning with a foundational event – a case of state-enforced mass population removal in 1909. The thesis traces the ways these ideas and practices came to be internalised and adopted by vigilante non-state actors as part of post-colonial politics, culminating explosively in September 1991 in the fishing villages on the shoreline of Bugungu in an episode of violent collective expulsion. With echoes and inversions of 1909, this event constituted a reaction to political insubordination rhetorically rendered as criminality.

Historiographies

Agro-pastoralism or barbarism?: ethno-civilisational hierarchies and stereotypes in africa

This thesis intervenes in a literature on the relationship between hierarchy and ethnicity in African history. Horizontal cleavages remain the primary

preoccupation of Africanists, as anthropologist Jemima Pierre observes.[8] Scholars tend to promulgate an image of colonial ordering of African 'ethnic' subjects along horizontal, spatial lines, beneath the racial hierarchy of European, over African.[9] Since the 1980s many Africanist historians became absorbed by processes of division and agglomeration as debates intensified over the provenance of ethnic formation.[10] Earlier contentions about the 'colonial invention of tribalism' gave way to a degree of consensus that pre-colonial processes of inclusion and exclusion placed important limits on the projects of invention.[11] But the place of vertical relations bound up with ethnic stereotypes in these processes of identification is rarely addressed explicitly.[12]

While there is some consensus that ethnicity was not simply a colonial creation, through much of the literature runs the assumption that related stereotypes and hierarchies were products of the 'unequal opportunities for social mobility' in that

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[8] Jemima Pierre, 'Structure, project, process: anthropology, colonialism, and race in Africa', *Journal of Anthropological Sciences* 96 (2018), pp. 213-219 (215).
[9] A.J. Christopher, ''Divide and Rule': The Impress of British Separation Policies', *Area* 20, no. 3 (1988), pp. 233–240; Mahmood Mamdani, *Define and rule: native as political identity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2012); Julie MacArthur, 'Decolonizing Sovereignty: States of Exception along the Kenya-Somali Frontier', *American Historical Review* 124, no. 1 (2019), pp. 108-143 (120).
[10] For some early examples from this now vast literature, see Terence Ranger, 'Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika: The Invention of Ethnicity in Zimbabwe', in Leroy Vail (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London, 1989), pp. 118-150; J.D.Y. Peel, 'The Cultural Work of Yoruba Ethnogenesis', in E. Tonkin, Maryon Macdonald, and Malcolm Chapman (eds.), *History and Ethnicity* (London, 1989), pp. 198–215.
[11] Thomas Spear, 'Neo-traditionalism and the limits of invention in British colonial Africa', *JAH* 44 (2003), pp. 3-27; Paul Nugent, 'Putting the History Back into Ethnicity: Enslavement, Religion, and Cultural Brokerage in the Construction of Mandinka/Jola and Ewe/Agotime Identities in West Africa, c. 1650 – 1930', *CSSH* 50, no. 4 (2008), pp. 920-948.
[12] Africanist anthropologists have occasionally been attentive to contemporary practices, however. See Peter Geschiere, 'Regional Shifts—*Marginal Gains* and Ethnic Stereotypes', *African Studies Review* 50, no. 2 (2007), pp. 43-56; Julien Brachet and Judith Scheele, 'Remoteness is power: disconnection as a relation in northern Chad', *Social Anthropology* 27, no. 2 (2019), pp. 156–171.

era.[13] It is clear that stereotypes were produced by people through their differential claims to modernity, and access to the resources of the state, the church, and capitalist economic accumulation under colonialism.[14] Tribal stereotypes were of course much in use among white military recruiters, missionaries, colonial administrators and capitalist employers and the Africans they enlisted.[15] But Africanist historians have made very little attempt to examine, in particular, the ways pre-colonial stereotypes and related notions of hierarchy and civilization carried over and interacted with colonial ideas.

Stereotypes are a form of oral knowledge that reflect a human tendency towards cognitive economy; they are 'not the products of individual pathology but of cognitive regularities and shared culture'.[16] Laden with moral and political

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[13] Crawford Young, 'Patterns of Social Conflict: State, Class, and Ethnicity', *Daedalus* 3, no. 2 (1982), pp. 71-98 (76).
[14] On more general interactions between stereotyping and claims to modernity, see Jocelyn Alexander and JoAnn McGregor, 'Modernity and ethnicity in a frontier society: understanding difference in Northwestern Zimbabwe', *JSAS* 23, no.2 (1997), pp. 187-201; Pius S. Nyambara, 'Madheruka and Shangwe: Ethnic Identities and the Culture of Modernity in Gokwe, Northwestern Zimbabwe, 1963-79', *JAH* 43, no. 2 (2002), pp. 287-306. The notion of stereotyping and hierarchy is largely implicit in Aidan Stonehouse, 'The Bakooki in Buganda: identity and assimilation on the peripheries of a Ugandan kingdom', *JEAS*, 6, no. 3 (2012), pp. 527-543. He notes that momentum for Ganda-isation of the Kooki from the margins of Buganda was generated by the Kooki desire to acquire 'perceived modernity, innovation and prestige through becoming Baganda, even if, simultaneously, the integral concerns of the centre prohibited the realisation in actuality of Bakooki desires'.
[15] On martial stereotypes, see Anthony H. M. Kirk-Greene, ''Damnosa Hereditas': Ethnic ranking and the martial races imperative in Africa', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 3, no. 4 (1980), pp. 393-414; Timothy H. Parsons, '"Wakamba Warriors Are Soldiers of the Queen": The Evolution of the Kamba as a Martial Race, 1890-1970', *Ethnohistory* 46, no. 4 (1999), pp. 671-701; Risto Marjomaa, 'The Martial Spirit: Yao Soldiers in British Service in Nyasaland (Malawi), 1895-1939', *JAH* 44, no. 3 (2003), pp. 413-432; Timothy J. Stapleton, 'Martial Identities in Colonial Nigeria (c. 1900–1960)', *Journal of African Military History* 3 (2019), pp. 1–32. On occupational stereotyping, see Brian Siegel, 'The "Wild" and "Lazy" Lamba: Ethnic Stereotypes on the Central African Copperbelt', in L. Vail (ed.) *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London, 1989), pp. 350-371 (355).
[16] Rogers Brubaker, Mara Loveman and Peter Stamatov, 'Ethnicity as Cognition', *Theory and Society* 33, no. 1 (2004), pp. 31-64. See also Hal B. Levine, 'Reconstructing

judgements and expectations, stereotypes are part of ethnic thought – an element of the shared knowledge and practice of everyday social actors, who are constantly redefining the bounds, status, and meaning of categories. Contrary to certain assumptions, there is no reason to think that they were any more salient in local discourse during the colonial period than they were before or after, as Felicitas Becker observes.[17] Working on the Central African Copperbelt in the 1950s, J.C. Mitchell hypothesised that in the 'considerable prestige' attached to certain ethnic categories had its foundations in pre-colonial stereotypes and attendant hierarchies – 'the glory of their military forbears'.[18]

Stereotypes play an essential part in structuring the 'proto-racism' of ethnic hierarchies.[19] Such ideas have been developed in a strand of the Africanist literature which explores the idea of racialisation and its role in particular cases of inter-communal violence in Africa. Scholars focusing on the West African Sahel and Indian Ocean coast where the Arab world met the African have increasingly argued that racial thought should be viewed as part of the same spectrum as that of ethnicity, within a historically-specific, negotiable, 'shifting field of discourse'.[20] In Jonathon Glassman's work on Zanzibar, he discerns this 'general set of assumptions that humankind is divided among constituent categories, each of

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Ethnicity', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 5, no. 2 (1999), pp. 165-180.

[17] Felicitas Becker, 'Vernacular Ethnic Stereotypes: Their Persistence and Change in Southeast Tanzania, ca. 1890-2003', in Alexander Keese (ed.), *Ethnicity and the Long-term Perspective: The African Experience* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 93-121 (102).

[18] J.C. Mitchell, *The Kalela Dance,* Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 27 (Manchester, 1956), pp. 26-27

[19] Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ, 2004), p. 1.

[20] Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Bloomington & Indianapolis, 2011), pp. 10-11.

which is distinguished by inherited traits and characteristics'. [21] Ideas of hierarchy constituted a key element among the racial meanings by which ethnic distinctions were transmogrified. Keeping these as separate domains risks, sociologist Loïc Wacquant argues, 'the near-total exclusion of the study of racial(ized) practices, beliefs, and institutions *among* subordinate categories'.[22]

Glassman resists the contention that racial thought represented a colonial imposition. He invokes literatures from the 1960s to the early 1980s which reflected significant Africanist interest in stratification – particularly in relation to certain infamous cases of inter-communal conflict.[23] Many scholars observed widespread locally-embedded, dynamic ideas of difference and hierarchy.[24] Social evolutionism and related discourses could be subtly and insidiously grafted onto extant local idioms of civilization and barbarism – 'African ways of expressing

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[21] Jonathon Glassman, 'Slower Than a Massacre: The Multiple Sources of Racial Thought in Colonial Africa', *The American Historical Review* 109, no. 3, (2004) pp. 720–754; Bruce Hall, *A History of Race in Muslim West Africa, 1600–1960* (Cambridge, 2011).

[22] Loïc Wacquant, 'For an Analytic of Racial Domination', *Political Power and Social Theory* 11 (1997), pp. 221–234 (25-26). See also Ramón Grosfoguel, 'Race and ethnicity or racialized ethnicities?: Identities within global coloniality', E*thnicities* 4 (2004), pp. 315-336.

[23] Arthur Tuden and Leonard Plotnicov (eds.), *Social Stratification in Africa* (New York, 1970); Martin R. Doornbos, 'Kumanyana and Rwenzururu: Two Responses to Ethnic Inequality', in Robert I. Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui (eds.), *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York, 1970), pp. 1088-36; Ali Mazrui, 'Ethnic Stratification and the Military-Agrarian Complex: The Uganda Case', in Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (eds.), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience* (Cambridge, Mass, 1975), pp. 420-452; M. Catharine Newbury, 'Colonialism, Ethnicity, and Rural Political Protest: Rwanda and Zanzibar in Comparative Perspective', *Comparative Politics* 15, no. 3 (1983), pp. 253-280.

[24] Michael G. Kenny, 'Mirror in the Forest: The Dorobo Hunter-Gatherers as an Image of the Other', *Africa* 51, no. 1 (1981), pp. 477-495; Igor Kopytoff, 'The Internal African Frontier: The Making of African Political Culture', in Igor Kopytoff (ed.), *The African frontier: the reproduction of traditional African societies* (Bloomington, IN, 1987), pp. 3-81; David Newbury, 'Bunyabungo: The Western Frontier in Rwanda, c. 1750-1850', in Igor Kopytoff (ed.), *The African frontier*, pp. 164-192; John L. Comaroff, 'Of totemism and ethnicity: Consciousness, practice and the signs of inequality', *Ethnos* 52, nos. 3-4 (1987), pp. 301-323.

identity, of creating hierarchies of superiority and inferiority', as Terence Ranger puts it.[25] Ethno-civilizational thinking was a particularly salient aspect of precolonial Ganda ideology in relation to their neighbours. John Tosh writes of the Ganda sense of 'racial superiority' to 'those who lacked centralised political institutions'. [26] 'The peoples beyond Lake Kyoga were Bakedi, uncivilized naked savages, Soga were quasi-slaves, but the Nyoro were regarded with particular malice', writes Shane Doyle. Nyoro became a synonym for 'stupidity and backwardness', he explains; such stereotypes conditioned acts of violence '[w]ars against Bunyoro did not follow normal rules'.[27] These earlier ethno-civilizational discourses were particularly pronounced in regard to relatively centralised state systems such as those of the Great Lakes of eastern Africa where '[a]ncient motifs (...) attributed civilizing processes to exogenous intruders'. More recent believer/non-believer dichotomies emanating from Islamic Middle East and North Africa thus 'lay like palimpsests on a substrate of earlier ideas'.[28] Exclusion and the expression of unease through ethnic stereotyping had a long history of its own', asserts Richard Waller, 'as did attempts to resist it'.[29] Acts of designation and stereotyping of certain collectivities by ethnic outsiders often precede ethnic self-designation. For John Comaroff, ethnic identification 'entails the complementary

[25] T.O. Ranger, 'Race and Tribe in Southern Africa: European Ideas and African Acceptance', in R.J. Ross (ed.), *Racism and Colonialism: Essays on Ideology and Social Structure* (Hague, 1982), pp. 121-142 (122).
[26] John Andrew Tosh, 'Political authority among the Langi of northern Uganda, circa 1800-1939', unpublished PhD thesis (London, 1973), p. 231.
[27] Shane Doyle, 'Immigrants and indigenes: the Lost Counties Dispute and the evolution of ethnic identity in colonial Buganda', *JEAS* 3, no. 2 (2009), pp. 284-302 (288-289).
[28] Jonathon Glassman, 'Ethnicity and Race in African Thought', in William H. Worger, Charles Ambler, and Nwando Achebe (eds.), *A Companion to African History* (Hoboken, NJ, 2018), pp. 200-223 (215).
[29] Richard Waller, 'Ethnicity and Identity', in John Parker and Richard Reid (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 94-113 (105).

assertion of the collective self and the negation of the collective other'; it may 'call into question shared humanity', 'on putative cultural or "civilizational" grounds'.[30]

This thesis brings these ideas more explicitly into dialogue with the preoccupations of a literature concerning 'ecological ethnicities'.[31] Among this substrate of civilizational, proto-racial discourses lay a stronger, older dimension. Building on the insights of Frederick Barth, via Steven Feierman, historians of Africa have noted the ways that societies – and perceptions thereof – are shaped by the ways livelihoods are adapted to environmental niches – e.g. rivers, lakes, hills, mountains, plains.[32] Environmental dichotomies were a pervasive feature in

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[30] John L. Comaroff, 'Of totemism and ethnicity: Consciousness, practice and the signs of inequality', *Ethnos* 52, nos. 3-4 (1987), pp. 301-323.
[31] The term has been adopted by historian John Lonsdale in a recent series of publications: 'Ethnic patriotism and markets in African history', in Hiroyuki Hino, Arnim Langer, John Lonsdale, and Frances Stewart (eds.), *Ethnic Diversity and Economic Instability in Africa: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 19–55; and 'Kenya's four ages of ethnicity', in Hino et al (eds.), *From Divided Pasts to Cohesive Futures: Reflections on Africa* (Cambridge, 2019), pp. 15-68.
[32] Steven Feierman, *The Shambaa kingdom : a history* (Madison, 1974), p. 18; Michael G. Kenny, 'Mirror in the Forest: the Dorobo hunter-gatherers as an image of the other', *Africa* 51, no. 1 (1981), pp. 477-495; Thomas Spear, 'Introduction', in T. Spear and R. Waller (eds.), *Being Maasai: ethnicity and identity in East Africa* (Athens, 1993), pp. 1-18; Nancy J. Jacobs, 'Environment, Production and Social Difference in the Kalahari Thornveld, c1750-1830', *JSAS* 25, no. 3 (1999), pp. 347-373; David S. Newbury, 'Precolonial Burundi and Rwanda: Local Loyalties, Regional Royalties', *IJAHS* 34, no. 2 (2001), pp. 255-314 (pp. 259-266); William Beinart and Joann McGregor, 'Introduction', in W. Beinart and J. McGregor (eds.), *Social history and African environments* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 1-24 (p. 4); Michael Sheridan, 'Tanzanian Ritual Perimetrics and African Landscapes: The Case of Dracaena', *IJAHS* 41, no. 3 (2008), pp. 491-521 (p. 493). Work on relations with littoral environments have been fewer and further between: Richard Roberts, 'Fishing for the state: the political economy of the Middle Niger Valley', in Donald Crummey & C.C. Stewart (eds.), *Modes of Production in Africa: the Precolonial Era* (London, 1981), pp.175-203 (196); Michelle Wagner, 'Environment, community and history: "Nature in the mind"', in Gregory Maddox et al., *Custodians of the Land: Ecology and Culture in the History of Tanzania* (London, 1996), pp. 175-199; David Schoenbrun, 'Ethnic Formation with Other-Than-Human Beings: Island Shrine Practice in Uganda's Long Eighteenth Century', *History in Africa* 45 (2018), pp. 397–443 (399); David L. Schoenbrun and Jennifer L. Johnson 'Introduction: Ethnic Formation with Other-Than-Human Beings', *History in Africa* 45 (2018), pp. 307–345.

collective categorisations across pre-colonial Africa. But these 'natural referents were often infused with complex social meaning which transcended the obvious topographical features', Richard Waller maintains.[33]

Ethno-civilisational thought in regard to livelihoods was central to pre-colonial regional webs of economic and political relations. 'A people's adaptation to its environment was its civilization', argues John Iliffe.[34] '[I]t is conceivable that the marks of a distinctive way of life were more important for a person's ethnic identification than their language', notes Felicitas Becker; at any rate these marks were salient within regional 'pecking orders'.[35] Pastoralists tended to look down on agricultural work while farmers saw cultivation as civilizational work.[36] But regional consensus on the relationship between ethnicity and 'class standing' relied on both pastoralists and farmers stigmatising livelihoods based on hunting and gathering as backward or morally ambiguous. Great Lakes forest peoples, for instance, occupied 'the bottom rung on the ethnic ladder'.[37] 'African explanations of social and racial characteristics', observes William Beinart, 'may have something in common with older traditions of European environmental determinism'.[38]

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[33] Richard Waller, 'Ecology, migration, and expansion in East Africa', *African Affairs* 84, no. 336 (1985), pp. 347-370 (p. 349).
[34] John Iliffe, *A modern history of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 9-11.
[35] Felicitas Becker, 'Vernacular Ethnic Stereotypes: Their Persistence and Change in Southeast Tanzania, ca. 1890-2003', in Alexander Keese (ed.), *Ethnicity and the Long-term Perspective: The African Experience* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 93-121 (102).
[36] John Lonsdale, 'Soil, Work, Civilisation, and Citizenship in Kenya', *JEAS* 2, no. 2 (2008), pp. 305-314.
[37] David Schoenbrun, 'African Pasts for African Futures in a time of Radical Environmental Change: Notes on History and Policy in Africa's Reconstruction', in Robert Launay (ed.), *PAS Working Paper Number 17* (Evanston, Illinois, 2009), p. 25.
[38] William Beinart, 'African history and environmental history', *African Affairs* 99 (2000), pp. 269-302 (229-230).

Discourses of civilisation and barbarism were to develop with violent consequences between Great Lakes communities in what had been pre-colonial state systems with relatively interspersed populations, such as the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, and the Iru and Hima in neighbouring the kingdom of Nkore. But ethno-civilisational ideas were also intensely expressed where these eco-ethnological taxonomies and hierarchies articulated with the core-periphery dynamics.[39] Seeking to provincialise the agro-pastoral plateau where most of the Great Lakes' centralised political authorities were found, this thesis explores the place of fishing on the margins of Bunyoro, demonstrating that it was not just in European imaginations that riverine regions were rendered 'treacherous places' – 'unruly and unpredictable' zones 'where both subjecthood and loyalty were in doubt'.[40] As such, this thesis constitutes an act of reinsertion – putting the lacustrine in the interlacustrine historiography – which various scholars have demanded.[41] This study emphasises the historical significance of the consumption of fish, in particular; its status as a marker of cultural difference in the western interlacustrine region is perhaps masked by the gradual disappearance of the dietary taboo since the mid-twentieth century, and its different status within the

[39] The ecological element is hinted at in Carolyn Hamilton and John Wright, 'The Making of the AmaLala: Ethnicity, Ideology and Relations of Subordination in a Precolonial Context', *South African Historical Journal* 22, no 1 (1990), pp. 3-23 (18-19).
[40] Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires*, 1400–1900 (Cambridge, 2014), p. 103
[41] Joan Vincent, *Teso in transformation: the political economy of peasant and class in Eastern Africa* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 20; Jean-Pierre Chrétien and Scott Straus, *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two thousand years of history* (New York, 2003), p. 45; Charles Asowa-Okwe, 'Precolonial fishing industry in Lake Kyoga', *Makerere Historical Journal* 4, no. 1 (1988), pp. 25-50; Charles Asowa-Okwe, 'The pre-colonial social formation among the Bakenhe fishing community of Lake Kyoga region of Uganda, 1800-1894', unpublished MS (Kampala, 1996); and Charles Asowa-Okwe, *Capital and conditions of fisher-labourers of Lakes Kyoga and Victoria canoe fisheries* (Kampala, 1989). See also Efuraimu Rwumva Kamuhangire, 'The Pre-Colonial History of the Salt Lakes Region of South Western Uganda, c. 1000-1900 AD', (Makerere University, 1993).

neighbouring Great Lakes kingdom of Buganda – Bunyoro's in many ways anomalous ancient rival that was to dominate colonial Uganda and its historiography.

This thesis argues that certain stereotypes demonstrated considerable stability that belied simultaneous subtle – and not-so-subtle – shifts in social, political, and economic relations between the ascribers and the ascribed. As such, this study builds on the insights of the Indianist scholarship concerning the pre-colonial stereotypes that provided moorings – the 'cultural purchase' – for the colonial designation of 'criminal tribes'. 'Relatively simple ideas, which can absorb shifts of emphasis and different shades of meaning, while still retaining a familiar shape, are the best—the most resilient—stereotypes', posits Anastasia Piliavsky.[42] This thesis focuses on how the stereotypes in regard to Bugungu shifted to accommodate the encounter with colonial modernity. Attendant hierarchies were, however, contested and transformed amid the vicissitudes of the temporally and spatially uneven penetration of the state, capitalism, and Christianity. These transformations in fortune and status were sometimes dramatic, engendering dissonance, ambiguities, and inversions between collective images and places in imagined scales of status and civilisation, with explosive consequences.

But ethno-civilisationalism is not just about othering; it is fundamentally a matter of these same social, economic, and political changes influenced *self*-stereotyping. As such, ethno-civilisationalism can be seen to form a conceptual connection between what John Lonsdale terms 'moral ethnicity' and 'political tribalism'. For Lonsdale, moral ethnicity is the internal dimension of ethnicity: it is an intra-

[42] Anastasia Piliavsky, 'The "Criminal Tribe" in India before the British', *CSSH* 57, no. 2 (2015), pp. 323–354.

communal arena for ongoing moral arguments over civility in regard to wealth, age and gender. Political tribalism, on the other hand, is the external dimension: an arena of inter-communal competition over the resources of the state and the market. People made judgements over civilisational superiority and inferiority both within and between communities. Ethno-civilisationalism represents the threshold between the inner and outer 'architectures' of community; changes to the character of one, impacted the other.[43]

Bunyoro and ethnicity

By exploring the relationships between violence and ideas of civilizational hierarchy, this thesis addresses an unspoken tension in regard to the question of ethnicity in Bunyoro. Both popular representations and the dominant strand of the relatively small body of extant scholarship on pre-colonial Bunyoro has promulgated – if only implicitly in some instances – the assumption of correspondence between Nyoro polity and Nyoro ethnicity.[44] Ever since anthropologist John Beattie's research in the late 1950s, scholars of Bunyoro have remained oddly wedded to this notion of static isomorphism, casting the Nyoro state first encountered by Europeans in 1862 as the ethnically homogenous husk of a once expansive multi-ethnic Kitara empire.[45] In this view, the different pre-

[43] John Lonsdale, 'Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism', in P. Kaarsholm and J. Hultin (eds.), *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Roskilde,1994), pp. 131-150.
[44] J.H.M. Beattie, *The Nyoro State* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 13, 255; Edward I. Steinhart, *Conflict and Collaboration: The Kingdoms of Western Uganda, 1890-1907* (Princeton, NJ, 1977), p.19-20, 175-176; D. A. *Low*, *Fabrication of Empire: The British and the Uganda Kingdoms, 1890-1902* (Cambridge, 2009); Joel D Barkan, 'Bunyoro', in J. D. Barkan (ed.), *Uganda district government and politics, 1947-1967* (Madison, 1977), pp. 150-177 (151).
[45] For example, see Shane D. Doyle 'From Kitara to the Lost Counties: Genealogy, Land and Legitimacy in the Kingdom of Bunyoro, Western Uganda', *Social*

colonial sub-units of Bunyoro that lived on as colonial era counties and sub-counties 'had no special significance'.[46] On the rare occasions a slightly more diverse and spatially varied picture is briefly acknowledged, it is seemingly – and rather inexplicably – consigned to pre-colonial past.[47] But the scholarship has not engaged with the kingdom's internal politics of ethnicity. The only scholar to have undertaken extensive analysis of colonial Bunyoro, Shane Doyle, lays analytical emphasis on class, gender, and generation – axes of struggle deeply entangled with that of ethnicity – identifying key fault-lines between chief and peasant in the early colonial period, and between the former and literate modernizing 'new men' in the late colonial period.[48] Attempts by political scientists to reconcile this literature with the complex picture perceptible on the ground today result in the sublimation or subordination of ideas of internal difference to a 'sub-ethnic' level, a term that

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Identities 12, no. 4, (2006), pp. 457-470; Richard J. Reid, 'Past and presentism: The "precolonial" and the foreshortening of African history', *JAH* 52, no. 2 (2011), pp. 135-55 (p. 149); Richard J. Reid, *A History of Modern Uganda* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 291; Elliott Green, 'Explaining African ethnic diversity', *International Political Science Review* 34, no. 3 (2013), pp. 235-253 (p. 246); Adrian Hastings, *The construction of nationhood: ethnicity, religion and nationalism* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 149, 157. Crawford M. Young, *The African colonial state in comparative perspective* (London, 1994), pp. 149, 234; Susan J. Hall, 'The beginnings of Nyoro nationalism and the writers who articulated it during the early colonial period', unpublished PhD dissertation (Columbia University, NY, 1984); Crawford Young, 'Ethnicity and the Colonial and Post-Colonial State in Africa', in Paul Brass (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and the State* (London, 1985), pp. 57-93 (75-76).

[46] Joel D Barkan, 'Bunyoro', in J. D. Barkan (ed.), *Uganda district government and politics, 1947-1967* (Madison, 1977), pp. 150-177.

[47] At most, some admit a limited degree of cultural difference at the north-eastern peripheries where it is most conspicuous: the Jo-Palwo (known pejoratively as BaChope), who are anomalous Lwo-speakers whose area of settlement featured consequentially in histories of nineteenth-century Bunyoro. For scholarship on the pre-colonial history of the Palwo, see Adebowale I. Adefuye, 'Political History of the Palwo , 1400-1911', unpublished PhD dissertation (University of Ibadan, 1973).

[48] Shane D. Doyle, *Crisis & Decline in Bunyoro: Population & Environment in Western Uganda 1860-1955* (Oxford, 2006).

manages to lack indigenous equivalents, and sound both ambiguous and mildly demeaning.[49]

There are various reasons for the literature's failure to engage with this topic. Little research has been undertaken on, or from the perspective of, the northern and lacustrine margins of Bunyoro. Research on Bunyoro has tended to strongly mirror the foci of early colonial official interest wherein 'the capital had become magnified (...) as to somewhat obscure the rest of the District'.[50] For one of the earliest European missionary chroniclers of the region, the '*hauts-plateaux*' of Bunyoro's core was the only zone deemed worthy of comment.[51] Professional anthropologists several decades later were still exhibiting a strong preference for studying 'the unambiguous heartland of a society' rather than what could be called its 'uncertain peripheries', or the 'middle ground'.[52] This tendency to avoid difficult, intercalary, suspended spaces was exemplified by the anthropologist Beattie, whose entire oeuvre was based almost entirely on fieldwork conducted in just two localities in the same south-central county of Bugahya over nineteen months in 1951-1953.[53] Nyoro elites from the plateau have since the late colonial period promoted an external image of ethnic homogeneity concerning Bunyoro's

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[49] Roger Southall, *Parties and politics in Bunyoro* (Kampala, 1972), p. 35; Anders Sjögren 'Battles over boundaries: the politics of territory, identity and authority in three Ugandan regions', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 33, no. 2 (2015), pp. 268-284 (277).
[50] Wilson to Johnston, 6 September 1900, UNA, A12/1.
[51] J. Gorju*, Entre le Victoria, l'Albert et l'Edouard* (Rennes, 1920), p. 19.
[52] Kopytoff, 'The Internal', p. 5; David S. Newbury, *The land beyond the mists: essays on identity and authority in precolonial Congo and Rwanda* (Athens, GA, 2009), p. 3. For older exhortations to explore such zones, see Aidan W. Southall, 'Cross cultural meanings and multilingualism', in W. H. Whiteley (ed.), *Language Use and Social Change* (London, 1971), pp. 376-396 (376).
[53] J.H.M. Beattie, *Understanding an African Kingdom: Bunyoro* (New York, 1965), pp. 13-14.

indigenous population – one that bears a passing resemblance to that which dominates in regard to Buganda.[54]

Dominant narratives of Bunyoro's history have also tended to preclude discussion of ethnic hierarchies within Bunyoro. Part of the literature has tended to preoccupy itself more with vertical ordering of Nyoro society in three social strata: the ruling Biito clan at the top; below them the cattle-herding Huma clans; and at the bottom the agriculturalist Iru commoners.[55] But even this had faded, according to the historiography, by the advent of colonial administration. The Nyoro elites cast their community, and were themselves cast by others, as colonial-era *victims* of the cultural imperialism and the hauteur of negative stereotyping, not perpetrators and ascribers. The scholarship overwhelmingly presented the people of Bunyoro as the oppressed, suffering not only at the hands of their self-interested leaders, but also at the hands of both Buganda, and the British.[56]

This thesis concerns power relations and hierarchy, but seeks to move beyond static representations in order to explore the historicity of ethnicity in Bunyoro. As such, the study engages with a scholarly undercurrent which has resisted the temptation to flatten understanding of the complexities of belonging in Bunyoro past and present. The most thoughtful and lucid consideration within this less influential – and largely unpublished – strand of the literature is represented by

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[54] See Nakanyike B. Musisi, 'Morality as Identity: the Missionary Moral Agenda in Buganda, 1877–1945', *Journal of Religious History* 23, no. 1 (1999), pp. 51-74.
[55] For a piece on stratification that reflected its time's historiographical preoccupation with the emergence of state structures in relation to mode of production debate, see also Melvin L. Perlman, 'The traditional systems of stratification among the Ganda and the Nyoro of Uganda', in A. Tuden and L. Plotnicov (eds.), *Social stratification in Africa* (New York, 1970), pp. 125-61.
[56] Derek R. Peterson, 'Violence and Political Advocacy in the Lost Counties, Western Uganda', *IJAHS* 48, no. 1 (2015), pp. 51-72.

the brief intervention of anthropologist Simon Charsley, who conducted research on Bunyoro's north-eastern peripheries in the mid-1960s. Charsley contended that all of Bunyoro's indigenous population were 'politically Nyoro, i.e. subjects of the *Mukama*', but only some were 'the Nyoro proper', who were 'not (…) an assimilating tribe'; they were the 'bearers of the language and culture of the political and geographical centres of the former empire'. To Charsley, Bunyoro represented the remnant of that 'culturally diverse' 'multi-tribal empire' but one whose component parts still culturally demonstrated 'very considerable differences' in spite of the continuing 'cultural domination of the Nyoro proper'.[57] This thesis takes up Charlsey's interests, exploring the changing nature of the 'improper' peripheries' engagements with the core's ideas of civilisational propriety and hierarchy.

Classificatory violence: punishment and ethnic hierarchy in colonial africa

That violence and hierarchy lay at the heart of the 'civilising mission'. Violence 'constituted colonial difference', as it was through these corporeal practices that colonisers 'governed the colonized en masse'.[58] 'The purpose and duty of the

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[57] S. R. Charsley, 'The Formation of Ethnic Groups' in Abner Cohen (ed.), *Urban ethnicity* (London, 1974) pp. 337-368 (366-368); S. R. Charsley, 'Patterns of social organization in an area of mixed immigration in Uganda', unpublished PhD dissertation (University of Manchester, 1969), pp. 34-37. For slightly more muddled but similar accounts, see Renee Tantala, 'The Early History of Kitara in Western Uganda: process models of political and religious change', unpublished PhD dissertation (University of Wisconsin, WI, 1989), pp. 79, 95-96, 98; Godfrey N. Uzoigwe, 'Updating the History of Uganda' *Tarikh* 3, no. 2 (1969), pp. 1-4 (2); Godfrey N. Uzoigwe, 'Kabalega and the Making of a New Kitara', *Tarikh* 3, no. 2 (1969), pp. 5-21; Godrey N. Uzoigwe, 'Precolonial Markets in Bunyoro-Kitara', *CSSH* 14, no. 4 (1972), pp. 422-455 (452); N. Bazaara, 'Agrarian Politics, Crisis and Reformism in Ugands, 1962-1996', unpublished PhD dissertation (Queen's University, 1997), pp. 259, 267-268.

[58] Anupama Rao and Steven Pierce, 'Discipline and the other body: Correction, Corporeality, and Colonial Rule', *Interventions* 3, no. 2 (2001), pp. 159-168 (164). See also Kim A. Wagner, 'Savage Warfare: Violence and the Rule of Colonial

liberal imperialist was to raise colonized people up the ladder of civilization and train them to rule themselves', observes Elizabeth Kolsky. 'The notion of colonial tutelage provided an implicit justification for the exercise of colonial violence'.[59] But such violence was not distributed evenly. That '[c]olonial regimes punished different people differently' has been recognised in the Africanist scholarship.[60] A rich literature has developed about the place of draconian punitive strategies – from capital and corporal punishment to exile and deportation – in the colonial period. This historiography has often focused heavily on white settler colonies, such as Kenya, where 'the subject of law and order looms larger (...) than in any other British colonial possession in Africa'.[61] Brutal punishment was 'central to establishing the racial hierarchy of settler society'.[62] It inscribed and maintained 'the boundaries of colonial authority and African subjectivity'.[63]

But Africans were not punished as an undifferentiated mass under colonial rule. Among Africans, different collectivities were believed to exhibit different

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Difference in Early British Counterinsurgency', *History Workshop Journal* 85, no. 1 (2018), 217-317.

[59] Elizabeth Kolsky, 'The Colonial Rule of Law and the Legal Regime of Exception: Frontier "Fanaticism" and State Violence in British India', *American Historical Review* 120, no. 4 (2015), pp. 1218-1246.

[60] Nathan Riley Carpenter and Benjamin N. Lawrance, 'Introduction', in Nathan Riley Carpenter and Benjamin N. Lawrance (eds.), *Africans in Exile: Mobility, Law, and Identity* (Indian University Press, 2018), pp. 1-21 (16).

[61] David M. Anderson, 'Policing, prosecution and the law in colonial Kenya, c. 1905-39', in David M. Anderson and David Killingray (eds.), *Policing the Empire: Government, Authority and Control, 1830-1940* (Manchester, 1991), pp. 183-200 (183).

[62] Matthew Carotenuto and Brett Shadle, 'Introduction: Toward a History of Violence in Colonial Kenya', *IJAHS* 45, no. 1 (2012), pp. 1-7 (6); Brett L. Shadle, *The souls of white folk: White settlers in Kenya, 1900s-1920s* (Manchester, 2015), p. 8.

[63] Stacey Hynd, 'Law, Violence and Penal Reform: State Responses to Crime and Disorder in Colonial Malawi, c.1900–1959', *JSAS* 37, no. 3 (2011), pp. 431-447. See also Justin Willis, 'Violence, authority, and the state in the Nuba Mountains of Condominium Sudan', *Historical Journal* 46, no. 1 (2003), pp. 89-114 (95). For Willis, '[t]he racial categories which informed British understandings of the Sudan played a particular role in driving violence'.

collective shortcomings; 'colonial institutions often put more stress on the maladjustment of the collectivity than of the individual'.[64] Tending to be 'defined in ethnic terms', these collectivities 'were said to possess distinctive psychologies and bodies'.[65] The same Victorian racial taxonomic modes of thought entailed in the notion of 'martial races', gave rise to their 'the dark obverse': the belligerently insubordinate whose challenges to authority were treated not as politics but as crimes.[66] The severity and techniques of punishment were dictated and justified by constructions – often less formalised – of 'primitive', 'uncivilised' communities. The idea of racial hierarchy was inherent to ethnic differentiation. There was something fine-grained about the function of violence, as 'an index of the humanity of the colonized'.[67] Africans of certain collectivities needed more 'civilizing' than others, so colonial thinking went. It was a matter of gradation, and *degradation*. To produce a more subordinate attitude required a violence that was not only civilizing, it was *classificatory*. It reinforced, revalorised, established and maintained ethnic hierarchies and boundaries.

Similar to other aspects of communal governance, the discriminatory ethnological punishment regime in British Africa was influenced to some degree by India, though it remained unsystematic and unformalized by comparison. In India 'the administrative collectivization of punishment', reached its apotheosis in the

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[64] Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in question: theory, knowledge, history* (Berkeley, 2005), p. 143.
[65] Megan Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 11.
[66] Richard Waller, 'Legal History and Historiography in Colonial Sub-Saharan Africa', in Thomas Spear (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of African Historiography: Methods and Sources Vol 1* (Oxford, 2019), fn. 82.
[67] Anupama Rao and Steven Pierce, 'Discipline and the other body: Correction, Corporeality, and Colonial Rule', *Interventions* 3, no. 2 (2001), pp. 159-168 (163).

Criminal Tribes Act.[68] The Act gave the colonial government the power to gazette 'any tribe, gang or class of persons, or parts thereof as "criminal tribes"'. Individuals belonging to 'criminal tribes' whether implicated in criminal activity or not, faced special, excessive measures of punishment, surveillance, and sequestration.[69] British Africa lacked legally designated 'criminal tribes'. But punishment did ethnological work, albeit inconsistent and haphazard. This classificatory dimension was most apparent when collective punishment was employed as there was a need to establish a criteria 'by which a punishable collectivity could be defined'.[70] This inherent definitional imperative was clearly stated in the Collective Punishment Ordinance, enacted throughout much of British Africa from about 1909.[71] Inspiring far more infamous pieces of British imperial legislation outside of Africa, this formal legal codification of collective punishment gave officials the power to 'impose fines on all or any inhabitants of any village or district, or members of any tribe, sub-tribe or community'.[72] Even

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[68] Benjamin D. Hopkins, 'The Frontier Crimes Regulation and Frontier Governmentality', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 74, no. 2 (2015), 369-389.
[69] David E. Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj: the Indian Army, 1860-1940* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 34-35; Andrew J. Major, 'State and Criminal Tribes in Colonial Punjab: Surveillance, Control and Reclamation of the 'Dangerous Classes', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 33, 3 (1999).
[70] Steven Knapp, 'Collective Memory and the Actual Past', *Representations* 26 (1989), pp. 123-149 (p. 140)
[71] Philip A. Igbafe, 'Western Igbo Society and Its Resistance to British Rule: The Ekumeku Movement, 1898-1911', *JAH* 12, no. 3 (1971), pp. 441-459; Stacey Hynd, 'Law, Violence and Penal Reform: State Responses to Crime and Disorder in Colonial Malawi, c.1900–1959', *JSAS* 37, no. 3 (2011), pp. 431-447.
[72] Alex Winder, 'Policing and Crime in Mandate Palestine: Indigenous Policemen, British Colonial Control, and Palestinian Society, 1920–1948', unpublished PhD dissertation (New York University, NY, 2017), pp. 54-64; Naomi Shepherd, *Ploughing Sand: British Rule in Palestine 1917-1948*, (New Brunswick, 2000). Christopher N.J. Roberts, 'From the State of Emergency to the Rule of Law: The Evolution of Repressive Legality in the Nineteenth Century British Empire', *Chicago Journal of International Law* 20, no. 1 (2019), pp. 1-61. The CP Ordinance, Roberts argues, represented 'the most unusual and extreme example' of 'a well-established practice of quasi-martial law' – it stood as 'one of the bleakest, most direct incorporations of the use of force into legal form imaginable', enshrining in

when colonial agents dispensed punishments to the individual, they calibrated these acts to the particular collective to which that individual was deemed to belong – collectives corresponding to 'different degrees of social evolution'.[73] Individual punishment was in this way *collective*. Whether administered to the individual or the collective, this was thus *collectivising punishment*. The measures considered necessary to remedy these collective shortcomings were tailored for the members of that collectivity.

The force of the inscription was partly a matter of the identification of the inscriber. On the margins of colonial Uganda, as elsewhere, British officials at times imported African chiefs – 'native aliens' – deemed sufficiently advanced to act as apostles of civilisation. The case of Bugungu demonstrates that the 'sub-imperialism' that Andrew Roberts has identified in Uganda was not limited to the work of Ganda colonial agents, and outlasted the early colonial period.[74] Far from the fetishised, ideologised doctrines of Indirect Rule, this practice was at times an improvisation, at times an imitation of pre-colonial arrangements, but always a reinforcement of ideas of ethno-civilisational hierarchies. As Moses Ochonu has argued, such arrangements disrupted the dichotomy of coloniser/colonised.

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law 'several features deeply inimical to even a minimalist commitment to a normative idea of the rule of law'. The CP Ordinance demonstrated a commitment to 'not only immunizing itself from review, in a metastasization of the typical declaration of immunity that might be passed in the wake of a period of martial law, but also severing the link between individual action and punishment'.

[73] Steven Pierce, 'Punishment and the political body: flogging and colonialism in Northern Nigeria', *Interventions* 3, no. 2 (2001), pp. 206-221.

[74] Andrew D. Roberts, 'The sub-imperialism of the Baganda', *JAH* 3, no. 3 (1962), pp. 435-50.

Collectivising punishments were often meted out by the ethnic Other – what Ochonu calls the 'proxy colonial' – at the other end of the cane.[75]

As such, this thesis advances a fresh understanding of the notion of *classificatory violence*. The term 'classificatory violence' usually denotes a symbolic, Bourdieusian sense: within social domains the taken-for-granted – 'doxic' – vision of division imposed by the powerful, *does violence* to subordinate peoples' self-understandings through misrepresentation. Classifications always entail such processes of exclusion.[76] Drawing on Derrida, Ernest Laclau posits that '[i]dentity's constitution is always based on excluding something and establishing a violent hierarchy between the two resultant poles'.[77] Reconfiguring Laclau's formulation, this thesis looks at the way punishment inscribed hierarchies of ethno-civilisationalism – *classificatory violence* of a different sort.

Other Karamojas: violence and exceptionalism in Uganda

Colonial violence in Uganda after the conquest era is very rarely discussed in the historiography. It is well established that the colonial conquest, and the decade or two that followed involved great violence in Uganda.[78] But it is also increasingly clear from other countries that accommodations between local potentates and officials, and improvements in bringing individual offenders to court, did not signal the end of harsh and arbitrary rule. Colonial violence tended to become not

[75] Moses Ochonu, *Colonialism by proxy: Hausa imperial agents and Middle Belt consciousness in Nigeria* (Bloomington, IN, 2014).
[76] Geoffrey C. Bowker and Susan Leigh Star, *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge, MA, 2000).
[77] Ernest Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (London, 1990), p. 33.
[78] Michael Twaddle, 'Decentralized violence and collaboration in early colonial Uganda', *JICH* 16, no. 3 (1988), pp. 71-85.

less common but less spectacular, more quotidian and routinised.[79] Some colonies, such as Kenya, have received far more attention than others from in this regard. As manifested in the continued use of the Collective Punishment Ordinance in Kenya in the inter-war years, post-conquest penality was often heavy- and high-handed. It was to powerfully shape the character of post-war 'state of emergency' tactics, counterinsurgency efforts, and anti-cattle raiding measures which would, in turn, have profound impact on the character of the post-colonial inheritor state.[80]

Persistent use of collectivising mode of punishments and invocation of ethno-civilisational hierarchies and attendant stereotypes in colonial Uganda tends to be seen as something that only remerged in the late colonial period, and even then only in the country's north-eastern pastoralist region of Karamoja. The uneven texture, and militarised nature, of colonial state power found particular expression in the Special Regions (Karamoja) Ordinance (No. 40 of 1958). Enabling the government to, among other things, confiscate cattle as a form of collective punishment for cattle raiding, this law made the Uganda statute books resemble

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[79] For an exception, see Justin Willis, 'Violence, authority, and the state in the Nuba Mountains of Condominium Sudan', *Historical Journal* 46, no. 1 (2003), pp. 89-114.

[80] It is only scholars of the pastoralist peripheries of settler Kenya that have described and analysed the CP Ordinance's workings in any detail. Early work focused on the 1910s and 1920s. David Anderson revealed the ways that, by means of subsequent stock theft ordinance in 1913, the Kenya administration attempted to 'release collective punishment from the limitations of a prosecution of last resort and identify it instead with a specific type of crime' David Anderson, 'Stock theft and moral economy in colonial Kenya', *Africa* 56 (1986), pp. 399-416; Richard Waller, 'Towards a contextualisation of policing in colonial Kenya', *JEAS* 4, no. 3 (2010), 525-541 (533); Richard Waller 'Arbitrary proceedings? Collective Punishment in Kenya', unpublished paper, kindly shared by the author. On the post-colonial legacies David M. Anderson, 'Remembering Wagalla: state violence in northern Kenya, 1962–1991', *JEAS* 8, no. 4 (2014), pp. 658-676; Hannah Whittaker, 'Legacies of Empire: State Violence and Collective Punishment in Kenya's North Eastern Province, c. 1963–Present', *JICH* 43, no. 4 (2015), 641-657.

'the Soviet Criminal Procedure Code', one of western Uganda's African representatives, Grace Ibingira, argued in a heated Legislative Council debate on the eve of independence.[81] One of his fellow members, Constantine B. Katiti, observed that the British did not contemplate such laws in the criminal hotspots of Kampala; the colonial government reserved collective punishment for the 'primitive' people, they had 'left backward'.[82] 'This is not a colony like Kenya', he reminded his overlords, 'it is a Protectorate and the British Government are obliged (...) to render services here on friendly terms of protection'.[83]

But the current thesis shows that in practice such distinctions often meant little to the British. Karamoja was only the most notorious, extreme case, among various exceptions. Both inside and outside Karamoja, the nature of colonial state power varied immensely across time and space in its political, ideological, and imaginative forms. As John Comaroff argues, drawing on both Foucault and Cooper, this power was rarely purely 'arterial' or 'capillary'.[84] In some places closer to the ideological and geographical centres of colonial governance, a less erratic, more systematic engagement developed between state and the colonised. The unseen infiltration through the disciplinary technologies occurred to a certain extent; the assumption of power became less questioned. Peasant consciousness underwent 'colonisation' as John Comaroff puts it, drawing on Gramsci and Fanon. But this political rationality's attempts to order to control and manage

[81] Grace Ibingira in Uganda Legislative Council, *Proceedings*, p. 1479 (24 July 1961).
[82] Uganda Legislative Council, *Proceedings*, pp. 1465-1466 (24 July 1961).
[83] Uganda Legislative Council, *Proceedings*, p. 1247 (17 July 1961).
[84] For 'capillaries', see Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (New York, 1980), p. 96. For the 'arterial' metaphor developed in response, see Frederick Cooper, 'Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History', *American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (1994), pp. 1516-1545 (1533).

individual bodies and construct subjects had particularly obvious limits in some places. As Comaroff points out, disciplinary processes 'were not a function of the state alone. Or even primarily'.[85] It was only particularly manifest where some key elements were present: Christian missions, introduction of individual rights of property ownership, and mobilisation into the capitalist sector as migrant workers. The arterial nature of colonial power was particularly palpable, by contrast, in the many graduated, indeterminate spaces and ambiguous zones of legal exclusions and circumscribed and *partially* suspended rights. The sorts of 'technologies of rule' characteristic of 'imperial formations', Stoler argues, 'thrive on the production of exceptions and their uneven and changing proliferation'.[86] This thesis examines an example of this through the Sleeping Sickness Area which the British declared in Bugungu in the early twentieth-century, before transforming it into a Game Reserve.

This thesis pushes against the public image of restraint upon which the Uganda administration increasingly prided itself, and to which Africans sought to appeal. It was was precisely because of this image of moderation that collectivising punishments very quickly devolved into oblique, ad hoc, concealed, and sometimes extra-judicial practice.[87] Uganda administration was keen to avoid the paperwork, noise, and friction involving London and local judiciaries and administrations that were involved in legalist approaches such as the Collective

[85] John L. Comaroff, 'Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere: Factions, Fragments, Facts and Fictions', *Social Identities* 4, no. 3 (1998), pp. 321-361 (336-338).
[86] Ann Laura Stoler, 'On Degrees of Imperial Sovereignty', *Public Culture* 18, no. 1 (2006), pp. 125-46.
[87] Historians of British India have noted that the colonial state was characterised by an 'improvised violence' of a more everyday, extrajudicial variety. T. Sherman, *State Violence and Punishment in India* (London and New York, 2010), p. 10.

Punishment Ordinance. Uganda pioneered that ordinance but very quickly ceased to use it; instead, the collectivising punitive mode sometimes appeared under other guises – as part of, for example, disease control measures, which the Colonial Office found less controversial than other ordinances. Over the course of the colonial period, as metropolitan mores changed, far cheaper, and more discreet, but no less cruel and discriminatory strategies evolved, entailing the targeted, transactional withdrawal of services, resources, and protections – using abandonment, neglect, and, sometimes, exposure to mortal threats as a means of extorting compliance.

Methods and sources

This thesis relies heavily on documentary sources. This project was possible because Bugungu generated a disproportionate documentary record for a place that appears so marginal. About two hundred square miles in area, its population numbered less than 10,000 for the entire colonial period, reaching about 20,000 in 1970. It has for at least two centuries been remote from the region's main political and ideological centres; under colonialism its population embraced Christianity and literacy relatively late and only lightly. But it was subject to an extraordinary range of political, moral, and commercial visions and projects since at least the nineteenth century: from the Turco-Egyptian trading system, to sleeping sickness displacement and reclamation in 1909-1930s under early British rule, to fisheries and wildlife conservation interventions since the 1930s.

The official archival record of Bugungu – distributed between London, Kampala, Masindi and Hoima – suffers from its relative paucity at all levels of government. The official record of colonial Uganda (1894-1962) is not what it is for other

countries. On the front of many file folders, bureaucrats had made references to the tantalising titles of other folders, which were today often nowhere to be found. These absences owe something to loss or destruction of archival materials during the main years of violent conflict and administrative breakdown from the 1970s. For example, many papers relating to Murchison Falls National Park held at the parastatal Uganda National Parks' headquarters in Paraa were destroyed during armed conflict in the 1980s. But other files were lost owing to the constraints and contingencies of bureaucratic practice predating the 1970s. Most material relating to the years prior to the 1950s had been culled or lost from the provincial archives during the 1960s. Some files were casualties of vast, systematic, wilful colonial erasure or concealment on the eve of Uganda's independence from Britain.[88] Under President Idi Amin's regime, the archives were under no immediate threat – although they were increasingly inaccessible and disordered. Government archives covering the post-independence years are even more scanty.

Government archives were supplemented with a variety of other documentary sources from the pre-colonial period to the 1990s, drawn from dozens of separate repositories, including tin-trunk archives. Often yielding only the most piecemeal, fragmentary relevant traces, sometimes not, these included newspaper and magazine articles, diaries, journals, ethnographic manuscripts, travelogues, meeting minutes, constitutions, letters, corporate filings, from archives of Catholic and Anglican missionaries, to personal archives of administrators, medics, game and park wardens and rangers, and anthropologists.

[88] Mandy Banton, 'Destroy? 'Migrate'? Conceal? British Strategies for the Disposal of Sensitive Records of Colonial Administrations at Independence', *JICH* 40, no. 2 (2012), pp. 321-335.

The nature all documentary sources pose certain challenges. For the first eighty years of the period under study, this is a written record from which African voices are largely absent. It was the product of European men. These diaries, reports, and correspondence accounts – even those replete with discussions of ethnic difference, hierarchies, and stereotypes – tell us more about the preoccupations of Europeans than it does the Africans. But colonial archives are not without value as historical sources. Missionaries', administrators' and other observers' interests and biases varied and their views can be read together to obtain a more complete view. This material is rendered valuable if its use adheres to the fundamental precepts concerning the analysis of evidence in regard to context, silences, intended audiences. The observations of Europeans sometimes prove to be extremely revealing, even if not for the reasons originally intended.

Bugungu's African literati made up for lost time from the 1950s on. The newspapers with which they engaged as readers and writers are an important part of the source base for certain chapters of this dissertation. This research drew on the expatriate-owned *Uganda Argus* into which African voices and news start to creep in the 1930s, but also vernacular newspapers that appeared post-war. In 1950s Bunyoro the two main newspapers were *Mwebingwa* ('the one to run to for help'), which was owned by the White Fathers Roman Catholic Mission, and *Mugambizi* ('the preacher'), owned by a handful of Protestant African elites. *Mwebingwa* and *Mugambizi* are useful sources because they were perhaps even more about views than news. These titles are helpful for the reconstruction of chronologies and events, but also for illuminating the debates and discussions central to the moral and political panics of the period. Until the 1990s, Bugungu's intellectuals were not compelled by the cerebral business of constructing

orthographies, grammars, dictionaries, and origin stories. It is 1950s newspapers – in a 'foreign' African language, Runyoro – that played the most central role in conjuring the Gungu community and shaping its concerns. It was primarily in order to be at least partly able to read these newspapers at first hand that I underwent six months of language training in Runyoro. Perhaps the most important contribution this project makes to the evidentiary basis for Uganda's history is by drawing attention to the value of these peripheral vernacular newspapers. The significance of newspapers as either a source or subject for the historiography of post-war Uganda, especially beyond Buganda, has not been recognised.

These sources present different limitations. African writers were almost entirely men; men with a particular type of education; men drawn, in Bugungu's case, from one particular ethnic group. But as one Africanist has convincingly argued, written culture was not just the purview of the elite: for the benefit of non-readers, literate individuals 'read aloud, translated, summarized, and amended'.[89]

Documents constitute much of the evidentiary base for this thesis; but it is necessary to move beyond the images perpetuated by literate elite men. To understand the micro-processes by which difference, hierarchy, and self is continuously fashioned, it is necessary to tap into vernacular quotidian discourse and social practice. I relied heavily on interview work in communities in northern Bunyoro to generate insights into the ways people talk, interact with one another, and narrate their own life histories and the history of their family and community. My rudimentary understanding of Runyoro (and even more rudimentary

[89] Luise White, *Speaking with vampires: rumor and history in East and Central Africa* (Berkeley, CA, 2000), pp. 250-255.

understanding of Lwo), enabled me to perform basic checks, and to appreciate the power of idiom, the significance of the particular lexical, dialectal and linguistic choices people make in certain circumstances, and the shared words between different languages, all of which can themselves be makers and markers of identity, as well as shedding light on deeper historical connections between linguistic communities.

Oral testimonies were gathered from dozens of people mainly between February 2014 and July 2015, and in September 2017, in Buliisa, Kigorobya-Kitana, Masindi, Hoima and Kampala.[90] Interviews were conducted largely in the mother tongue of informants (either Lugungu or Lwo) through university-educated interpreters. These semi-structured, informal, personal interviews normally lasted one to two hours, and took place in private, at informants' homes, or in quiet spots at local guesthouses. In some cases responses were elicited through the use of archival material and songs, but often just names of people and villages. These testimonies were recorded electronically and then transcribed before being translated in English by university graduates with qualifications in linguistics. The informants were not randomly selected. I tended to be directed to those widely reputed to be key sources of oral knowledge or memories of local history and traditions or more specialist topics. Perhaps half of the people I spoke to had no more than a few years of primary-level education. My informants included both men and women, drawn from different areas, clans, and ethnic groups. I revisited certain individuals who had proved particularly forthcoming and/or insightful. These interviews were anonymised as they contain content of a politically sensitive

[90] Some interviews took place in 2011, during scoping work undertaken before my doctoral studies began.

nature at a time when relationships between communities and with the state are particularly fraught.

These sources also have their advantages and limitations. Oral histories also contain elisions, obfuscations, and silences. Responses to questions were influenced to a certain extent by the concerns of the present: people who saw themselves as Gungu, and wished to cement both their political domination of the area, and their place in the national political order, to the detriment of other groups. Such people saw foreign researchers as powerful potential advocates for their interests. Certain culturally imposed constraints operate on the use of the past for contemporary purposes, however.[91] Oral sources' limitations can be mitigated to a certain extent by reading them iteratively with documentary sources and other oral accounts of those with opposing interests. In Bugungu, I spoke to people from different ethnic groups, patrilineal clans, and parts of Buliisa.

Thesis structure

The chapters of this thesis are organised chronologically. The first two chapters deal with the forty years prior to the inception of formal colonial rule: Chapter One considers ethno-ecological hierarchical and taxonomic thought in the relationship between the north-western lowlands and the plateau core in Bunyoro, c. 1860; Chapter Two proceeds to position Bugungu on the frontline of competing new imperialisms from the 1860s to the 1890s, and its consequences for core-periphery relations, and the ideas and hierarchies that underpinned them.

[91] Arjun Appadurai, 'The past as a scarce resource', *Man* 16, no. 2 (1981), pp. 201-219.

Chapters Three to Seven consider the colonial and early post-colonial periods. Chapter Three explores the stereotypes and hierarchies that crystallised in the initial encounter between the colonial administration and Bugungu, and that shaped the punitive strategies, masked by disease control rhetoric, adopted by the state. The chapter investigates the complex effects of collective displacement and exile for local ideas about difference and territoriality that would contribute to a campaign for reclamation of part of Bugungu in 1922.

Chapter Four details the punitive collectivising consequences of the colonial state's struggles with the conditions of the 1922 reclamation. It analyses the revalorisation of the 'wild' that occurred in the 1920s and 1930s through ideologies of wildlife preservation and indirect rule, and reveals the ways these competing, dehumanising inter-war reactions against 'Western civilisation' bedeviled the spatial segregation of nature and culture in Bugungu.

Chapter Five explores the consequences of the intrusion of capitalist production in the Bugungu fishing industry between the late 1930s and early 1950s. It traces the ways local actors experienced and appropriated the collectivising punitive interventions, and degrading discourses, of the early post-war colonial state to reclaim control of lucrative littoral resources from outsiders.

Chapter Six details the early-to-mid 1950s emergence of a literate elite in Bugungu in an era of rapidly developing political opportunities associated with the democratisation of local government in Bunyoro. It explores the tensions between these elites' rejection and internalisation of the degrading ethno-civilisational ideas at a time of rapid social change and an intensifying culture of collectivising punishment.

Chapter Seven concerns the attempt to reorder core-periphery ethno-civilisational hierarchies and stereotypes in the 1960s. In particular, it investigates the role played by capitalist corporations, namely Bugungu Ltd, in these inter- and intra-communal contestations and inversions.

Chapter Eight, echoing Chapter Five, details the localist rechanneling and refocusing of ethno-civilisational ambitions during the destruction and disorder of Idi Amin's rule and its aftermath. It analyses the ways state retreat, the dispersal of institutional power, and the experience of dramatic political and economic reversal provided the conditions for a shocking purge in 1991, as local actors internalised and assumed the brute collectivising power of the state in order to reinscribe ethno-civilisational hierarchies.

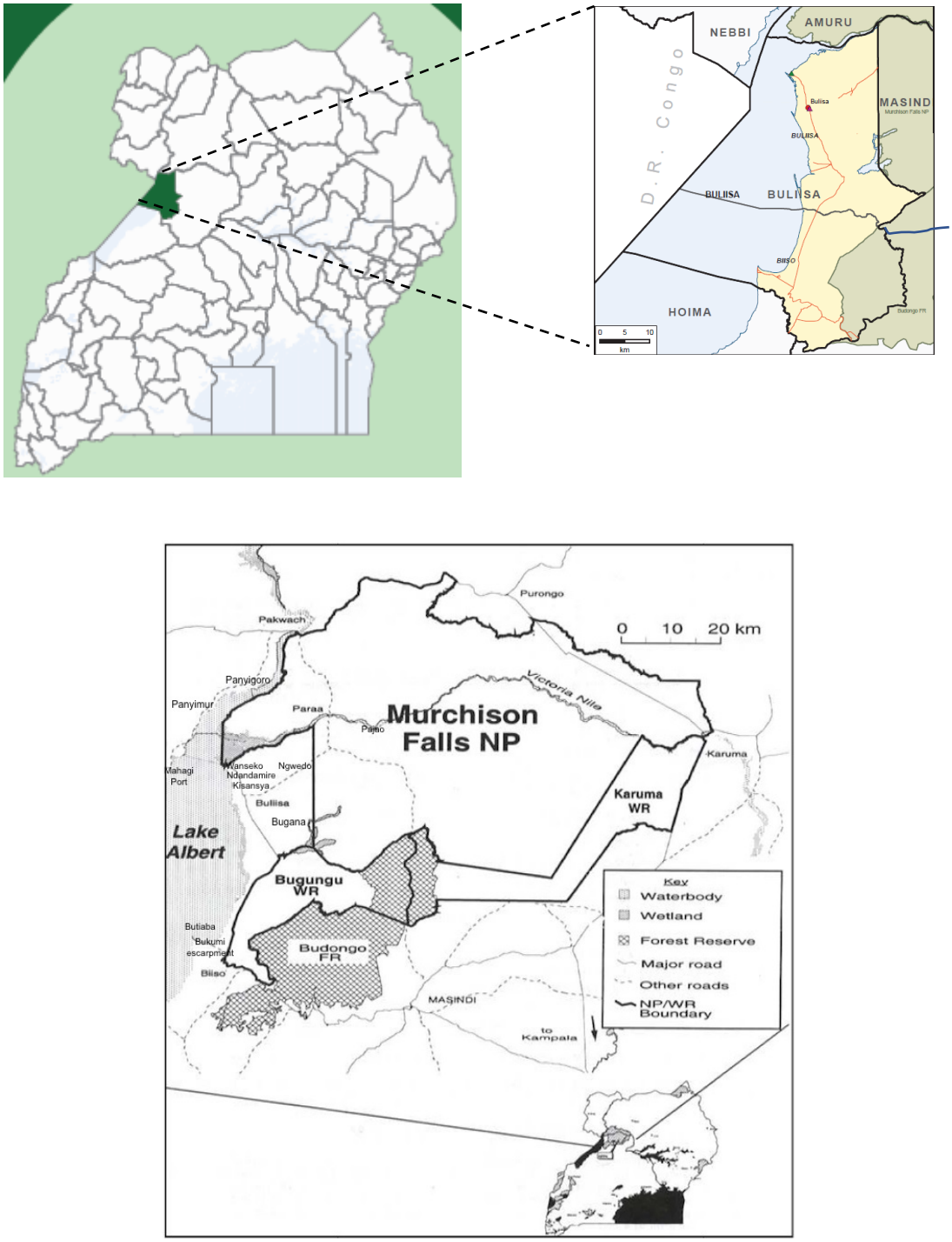

Figure 1: 'Location of Murchison Falls Conservation Complex' (2001).[92]

[92] From Uganda Wildlife Authority, *Murchison Falls Protected Area General Management Plan 2001-2011* (Kampala, 2001).

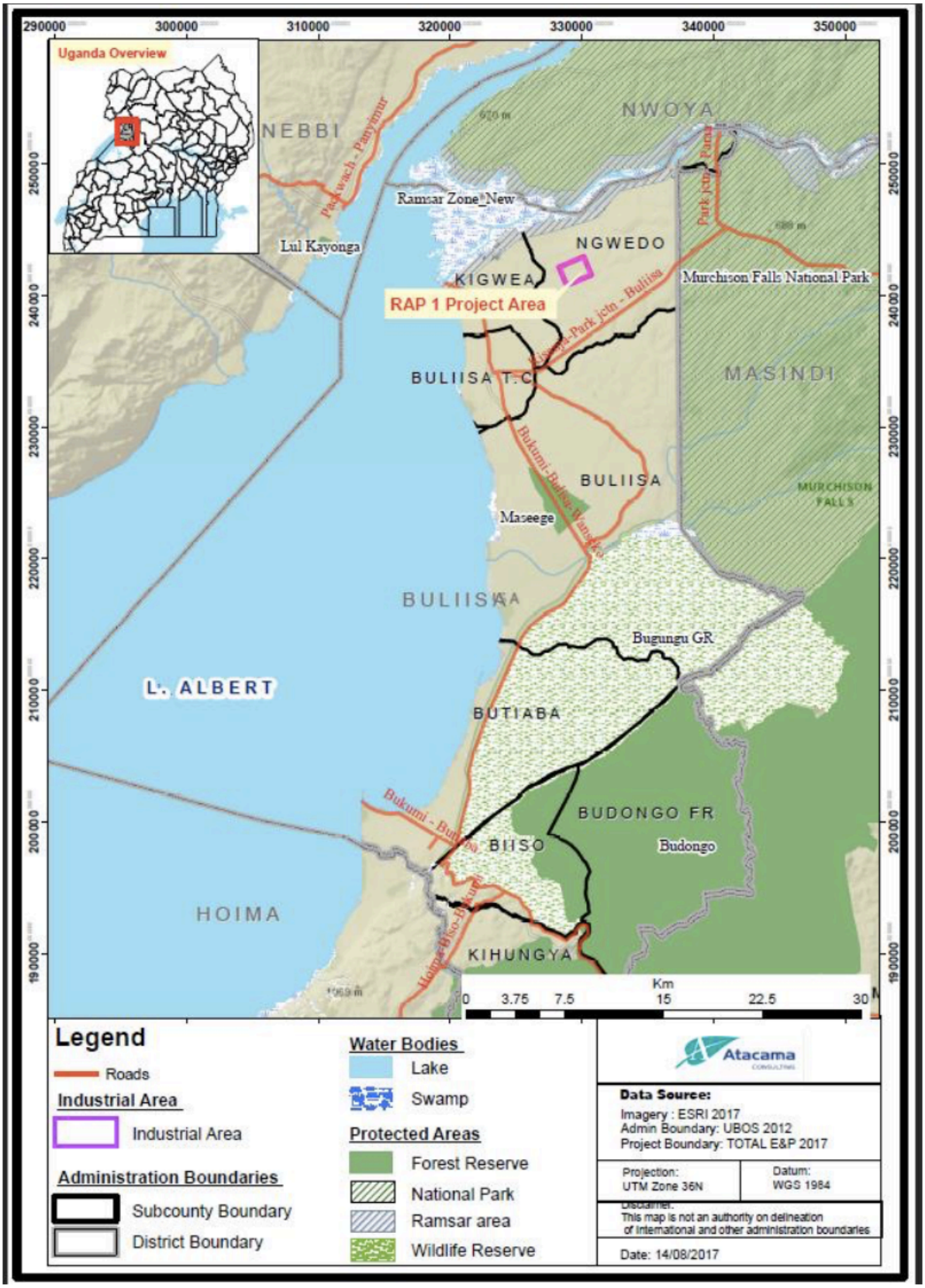

Figure 2: Planned petroleum infrastructure in Buliisa District today.

CHAPTER ONE: *Hierarchies, civilisations, and collectivities between the plateau and the plains, c.1860*

'[Ku-]Gungūza, *v. i.* go off by oneself, be independent, rebellious'.[93]

'[The Gungu ethnonym] came (...) from these Banyoro: the kings were just going there to collect some taxes (...) and they [the Gungu] would go hiding, so they called them "these Bagungu, they are not following us!"'.[94]

Scholarship on pre-colonial Bunyoro has tended to present a relatively simple, homogenous image in certain regards: from the relationship between collective identifications, culture, and polity, to the culture of politics. Society has been presented as highly differentiated in vertical terms; the dominant political concepts, it has been argued, were respect for hierarchical structures and acceptance of the authority of rulers. But these accounts present Nyoro society in undifferentiated spatial and horizontal terms. While scholars have noted the limited ability of the Nyoro state to make its power felt at the periphery, they have been less attentive to the ways the centre and the periphery conceived of each other in ethno-civilisational terms.[95] Focusing on the north-western borderland littoral of Bunyoro, this chapter complicates these visions by considering the ethno-civilisational discourses produced at the nexus of vertical and horizontal

[93] M.B. Davis, *A Lunyoro-Lunyankole-English and English-Lunyoro-Lunyankole Dictionary* (Kampala, 1938), p. 38.
[94] Int. Gungu 3b2.
[95] J.H.M. Beattie, *The Nyoro State* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 7, 251-255.

axes of difference. It explores the relationship between ethnic categories, environmental ideas, and political subjectivities in the early 1860s when the first Europeans travelers arrived.

Degrees of Nyoro-ness: ethno-civilisational discourses and alterity

The earliest, and most influential, ethnological image of Bunyoro produced in European travelogues was one of a rather homogenous remnant – the remaining piece of Kitara, the vast multi-ethnic 'empire' which had disintegrated unknown centuries before. Based on his visit in the early 1860s, British traveller John Hanning Speke promulgated the notion of 'Wanyoro' 'tribe', who spoke 'Kinyoro' in a country called 'Unyoro' on the eastern shore of Lake Mwitanzige.[96] Most of the European visitors who followed him to the area did not question this picture.[97] For one thing, even the most meticulous and scholarly among them continued using the Swahili toponymic (U-), ethnonymic (Wa-) and linguanymic (Ki-) prefixes, rather than those of local interlacustrine languages. Some travellers noted that the 'Wachopi' (i.e. Cope or Palwo) in the far north-east of Bunyoro were 'distinct in their type', and spoke a language 'different to the southern and central portions of the district'.[98] But this detail was only rendered salient owing to the

[96] John H. Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (London, 1863), p. 251. Samuel W. Baker, 'The Races of the Nile Basin', *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* 5 (1867), pp. 228–38 (234); Robert W Felkin, 'Notes on the Wanyoro Tribe of Central Africa', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, no. 19 (1893), pp. 136-192.
[97] For the ambiguity over exonyms and autonyms, see the table presented in Mehmet Emin, *Die tagebücher von dr. Emin Pascha Vol.1* (Hamburg, 1916), p. 270 (24 September 1877).
[98] Speke, *Journal*, p. 532; Samuel W. Baker, *The Albert N'yanza II* (London, 1866), p. 48, 187.

on-going Palwo rebellion against Kamurasi, the *mukama* (pl. *bakama*) or ruler of Bunyoro. Otherwise, early observers maintained, difference within Bunyoro was not ordered horizontally or spatially, it was ordered vertically. Reflecting these Europeans' own obsessions with status and rank, what preoccupied them were the hierarchical social distinctions between *Iru* agriculturalist commoners and their apparent superiors, the *Huma* pastoralists, who were both ruled over by the originally foreign Biito dynasty.[99]

What the observers did say about Bunyoro's margins calls into question this view of a culturally homogenous society ordered on lines of status and rank. While Iru/Huma distinctions may have been pronounced at the plateau core of Bunyoro, the 'operative units' with regards to both self-ascription and external identification tended to be rather different.[100] Folk ethno-taxonomies corresponded at least in part to the *saza* (pl. *masaza*)- the territorial political unit of the kingdom - or sometimes to a cluster of such *masaza*. The noun *ihanga* (pl. *mahanga*) meant both 'people' and 'country'; difference in Bunyoro was spatialised. The visitors better acquainted with Bunyoro's peripheries noted that 'the population of the kingdom' was a 'mixture' of 'scattered tribes', such as 'Magaya [Gahya], Wahuma [Huma], Shefahi [Palwo], Magungo [Gungu], and Wanyoro [Nyoro]'.[101] Sixty years later, the missionary-ethnographer John Roscoe noted that these sorts of 'independent tribes composed of loosely connected clans'

[99] Shane Doyle Interview, no. 25, SDP.
[100] Tantala, 'The Early', p. 79. For this phenomenon in Tooro, see Brian K. Taylor, *The Western Lacustrine Bantu* (London, 1962), pp. 45-47. Unusually Taylor's fieldwork involved visiting and working in all but three of the thirty-seven sub-counties over the course of two years of fieldwork. When Taylor did not read about similar divisions in Bunyoro referred to in Beattie's oeuvre, he surmised that they had simply 'not as yet been described' (p. 21).
[101] Casati, *Ten*, p. 261, 269.

had been incorporated and subordinated into political structures by Huma invaders in the past, but were still very much a feature of the socio-cultural landscape owing to differences 'both in type and language', and the fact that they were 'not nomadic' and therefore 'rarely moved out of their own districts'.[102]

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Nyoro category was a matter of political allegiance. Originally used derisively by their ancient rivals Buganda to the south, according to Roscoe, the term Nyoro meant 'freed', and referred to the elevation in status of Iru who 'showed ability and rendered special service to the king'.[103] The Nyoro category was inextricably bound up with state authority and patronage. The label had come to be assimilated locally to mean 'great chief, lord, master.'[104] But if Nyoro *allegiance* had become an ethnic self-identification, it had only become so among the people of the *masaza* of the state's plateau core – where early European visitors spent the most time. Touching the river Kafu, the *masaza* of Bugangaizi, Buga[h]ya, and Busindi alone were widely considered to be home to the 'Banyoro *boonyini*', which can be translated as 'true Banyoro' or 'Banyoro proper'.[105] In this plateau zone localised, alternative categories of belonging, namely Gangaizi, Gahya, and Sindi, carried less social, cultural, political meaning than those corresponding to other *masaza*.[106] At Bunyoro's cultural and political

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[102] Roscoe, *Bakitara*, p. 9
[103] John Roscoe, *The Bakitara or Banyoro* (Cambridge, 1923), pp. 2-3, 10-11; J. Nyakatura, *Anatomy of an African kingdom: a History of Bunyoro-Kitara* (New York, 1973), p. 65.
[104] Tantala, 'The Early', p. 98.
[105] Int. Gungu 21a.
[106] For more on the Gangaizi ethnonym, see N. Waniband, 'Letter to the editor', *Uganda Herald* , 12 February 1936; for 'Gahya', see Anon., 'Uganda', *CMI* 51, p. 291; for 'Sindi', see Wilson to Johnston, 2 October 1900, UNA, A12/1; 'Notes on the history of Masindi Township', 9 September 1957, MDA, BOX 511/MIS.15; and Simon R. Charsley, 'Population growth and development in northeast Bunyoro', *East African Geographical Review* 6 (1968), pp. 13-22 (p. 15).

heartlands, communities conceived in terms of kinship known to most people locally as *nganda* (sg. *luganda*), and widely translated as 'clans', were believed to have been dispersed and attenuated by a centralising Nyoro state in the eighteenth century.[107]

It was on the plateau that the foundations of the Nyoro state were strongest. Several generations of bakama had been buried there.[108] Although the Nyoro state was not based on a fixed capital, the itinerant royal courts from which mid-to-late nineteenth-century bakama ruled tended to move between sites in these counties; only when war with Buganda threatened, did they move further – retreating to Buruli on the Nile at the mid-eastern fringe of Bunyoro. Buga[h]ya saza, was widely considered to be the 'favourite district' of the majority of the bakama.[109] The conditions were relatively wet and cool, and the soils – lateritised red clay loams – were fertile;[110] the vegetation is composed of light, deciduous forest wet savannah grassland, dominated by elephant grass (*Pennisetum Purpureum)*.[111] On the plateau, the Nyoro state enjoyed relatively low tribute collection costs; chiefs expropriated a proportion of surplus production in terms of grain, beer, and labour in the form of tribute.

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[107] Edward I. Steinhart, 'From 'empire' to state: the emergence of the kingdom of Bunyoro-Kitara: c. 1350-1890', in Henri J. Claessen and Peter Skalnik (eds.), *The Study of the State* (The Hague, 1981), pp. 353-370. Cf. Doyle, *Crisis*, p. 14. Many of the interviews cited by the latter to counter the former view are from the northern periphery.
[108] Kenneth Ingham, 'The Amagasani of the Abakama of Bunyoro', *UJ* 17, no. 2 (1953), pp. 138-145.
[109] G. Wilson, 'Appendix B: Report on the legends, history, and people of UNYORO', Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Reports, no. 12, April 1902, UKNA, FO 2/804.
[110] Samuel White Baker, *Ismailia* (London, 1874), p. 314.
[111] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA* (London, 1888*)*, pp. 19-20.

The plateau was home to central Nyoro cultural conceptions. The mukama's power in part rested on his role as an intermediary between his people and the supernatural forces of the Cwezi-Kubandwa religion. This role was institutionalised in ceremonies that took place on the plateau at the Nyoro state's itinerant capital during the New Moon. Rituals were performed for the collective well-being and fertility of the land and people. Through these rituals the mukama was also believed to be able to control the rain. The mukama, through his patronage, had also to some degree co-opted the power of practitioners of *mbandwa* – possessory spirits which had power over disease and individual health and fertility. The most important of these spirits were known as the Cwezi, who were believed by many to have been historical personalities: the ancient ruling dynasty. The bakama sought to legitimise their authority by represent the ruling Biito dynasty as the inheritors of the power of the Cwezi. and this seems to have been at least partly responsible for sustaining the state's power for centuries. [112] This religion was at its most compelling on the plateau, which was littered with Cwezi shrines. The bakama attempted to validate these sites as 'symbols of Nyoro ethnic identity' and the legitimacy of Biito authority.[113]

The people of the heartlands considered their culture to be Nyoro culture, and to be superior. A few decades earlier before its loss through the secession of Tooro, a key *saza* at the cultural core of the Nyoro state was Mwenge, which functioned as a finishing school where noble sons polished their manners (*makune*) and

[112] Shane D. Doyle, 'The Cwezi-kubandwa debate: gender, hegemony and pre-colonial religion in Bunyoro, western Uganda', *Africa* 77, no. 4 (2007), pp. 559-581; Justin Willis, *Potent Brews: A Social History of Alcohol in East Africa, 1850-1999* (Athens, OH, 2002), pp. 82-84.
[113] Peter Robertshaw, 'Explaining the Origins of the State in East Africa', *East African Archaeology* (2003), pp. 149-166 (p. 162).

language.[114] It appears that Bugahya was seen in a similar light. One early visitor seems to have been informed that the Gahya tongue was the 'authoritative' and 'most elegant' form of Runyoro.[115] People from the central plateau saw themselves as bearers of a higher culture; civilisation or *kwegesebwa* was a matter of tutelage; it shared a root with a verb meaning 'to learn something that could be taught'.

The more a population was seen to diverge from these cultural and political norms, the more likely it was to be perceived pejoratively by the uplanders as not 'true' Nyoro or perhaps even not Nyoro at all. Hierarchical, ethno-civilisational discourses were much in evidence. The Runyoro language term connoting inferior, barbarian status was *owamahanga* or *munya'ihanga* which meant literally something to the effect of 'of the tribe' or 'tribesman', but also simply 'foreigner'.[116] Distant peoples were widely reputed to be 'those who eat people' (*balyabantu*), or sorcerers (*barogo*).[117] On the plateau these ideas were perhaps particularly crucial to the self-image of certain people in central Bunyoro. There were gradations of status even on the plateau, with some clans considered more lowly; for those clans, the ideas of ethnic status and exclusivity that asserted superiority over people on Bunyoro's margins may have been especially important.

The primary constitutive Other of the people of these tablelands were to be found in what they called 'the land of wild dogs' (*Mhwahwa*) – Bunyoro's ancient rival

[114] Beattie, *Nyoro State*, p. 135.
[115] Mehmet Emin, *Die tagebücher von dr. Emin Pascha Vol. 3* (Hamburg, 1922), p. 204 (24-30 May 1886) and p. 220 (3 June 1886).
[116] For *Owamahanga* as 'gentile', see H. E. Maddox, *An Elementary Lunyoro Grammar* (London, 1902), p. 136.
[117] Beattie, *Nyoro State*, p. 66; J. Beattie, 'Tonya: A lakeside settlement in Bunyoro', in J. Beattie and G. Lienhardt (eds.). *Studies in Social Anthropology* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 30-40 (33).

state of Buganda.[118] But the other end of Bunyoro was home to *internal* others, who, like the Ganda, were bound up with the establishment of Nyoro-Gahya *self*-identity. Somewhat less Nyoro than the people of the plateau were the small populations of Bunyoro's narrow littoral middle-fringes: the Kibiro and the Kobya (or Tonya) on the lake to the west; [119] the Ruuli on the river to the east.[120] But the sites of the most questionable 'Nyoro-ness' were the northern margins, among the so-called 'Gungu' of Bugungu and the 'Cope' (Palwo) of Kibanda and Kihukya *masaza*. The Gungu and Cope ethnonyms were used with greater frequency and geographically denotive clarity and consistency than 'Gahya'.

Ecological ethnicities, hierarchies and stereotypes between the plateau and the littoral

Different relationships to the environment were an importance element of these categories and hierarchies of political belonging. Everyday ethnic chauvinism most commonly related to livelihoods and food. That could operate in terms of the pastoralist-agriculturalist divide that was salient in the central plateau: one early colonial anthropologist later noted that the Iru were 'despised' by the Huma 'not because of their poverty, but because of their mode of life' – their 'living by a rude cultivation of the soil'.[121] But there was another mode of life that even the agriculturalists tended to scorn. One of the region's other natural dichotomies

[118] Roscoe, *The Bakitara*, pp. 2-3; Nyakatura, *Anatomy*, p. 65.
[119] For Kibiro, see James Augustus Grant, 'Summary of Observations', *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 42 (1872), pp. 243-342. See also Mehmet Emin, *Die tagebücher von dr. Emin Pascha Vol. 3* (Hamburg, 1922), p. 220 (3 June 1886). For Kobya, see Marie-Joseph Arondel, 'Au Lac Albert', A.G.M.Afr., P156/2; A.B. Fisher, 'Itineration Round Lake Albert', *Uganda Notes* 11, no. 11 (1911), pp. 171-172.
[120] Albert B. Lloyd, *Uganda to Khartoum* (London, 1906), p. 122.
[121] Roscoe, *Bakitara*, p. 9

counterposed the Gahya-Nyoro 'people of the hills' – *bantu b'ensozi* – and the Gungu of the lowlands. The consumption of fish seems to have been the most significant marker of difference. On the plateau, dietary restrictions had developed around fish, which was seen as a marker of low status. One visitor observed fishermen selling their '(so-called) fresh and dried fish' at a market on the plateau',[122] he also commented that outside the 'lake districts' people tended to 'entirely avoid and despise it'.[123]

In Bugungu, livelihoods were seen differently. Within Bugungu, the division of labour was more heavily gendered, and cultivation, along with the majority of domestic duties, are said to have been carried out by women.[124] The domain of men lay elsewhere: they were 'passionate fishers and hunters', and 'very fond of all kinds of game and fish', an early visitor noted.[125] The bow and arrow occupied a central place in lowland society , in contrast to upland Bunyoro.[126] But to a quite strikingly unusual degree, the lake and river were at the centre of the productive environment for most men in Bugungu. While in Runyoro and related interlacustrine languages the word for earth, soil or land was *itaka*, in the Bantu

[122] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 113.
[123] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 74; Emin, 'Journal einer Reise', p. 187; John Roscoe, *The northern Bantu* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 77; Kitching, *Backwaters*, p. 114; A.D.P. Hodges, Annual Medical Report 1911, UKNA, CO 536/51.
[124] Int. Gungu 1a; Shane Doyle Interviews nos. 21, 25, & 26, SDP.
[125] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 17, 74.; Mehmet Emin, 'Reisen in Äquatorial-afrika, 1877', *PGM* 24 (1878), pp. 217-228, 368-377. Emin, 'Journal einer Reise', p. 187; See also, Albert B. Lloyd, *Uganda to Khartoum* (London, 1906), pp. 146-148; Roscoe, *Northern*, p. 77; A. L. Kitching, *On the backwaters of the Nile* (London, 1912) p. 114.
[126] For the absence of bow and arrows on the Bunyoro plateau, see James Augustus Grant, *A Walk Across Africa* (London, 1864), p. 293; Samuel W. Baker, *Ismailia* (London, 1874), pp. 376-377; Franz Stuhlmann and Emin Pasha, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin, 1894), p. 175; Int. Gungu 5a; James Augustus Grant, *A Walk Across Africa* (London, 1864), 293; Samuel White Baker, *Ismailia* (London, 1874), pp. 285-286, 376-377; Roscoe, *The Bakitara*, pp. 314-321.

languages of Bugungu the same word meant 'lake'.[127] Local aquatic vocabularies, taxonomies and technologies were highly developed.[128] Most of the major settlements in Bugungu were located along the shoreline and the river to the falls.[129] It was not only fish that came from these waterbodies. Hippopotamus was hunted with a spear adapted by means of a rope and a float made of the ambatch tree. And, in times of hardship, people could take to foraging for aquatic herbs, or burning the papyrus in order to transform islands in the river into fertile – but rather precarious – floating farmland (*nswaa*).[130]

The significance of this lifestyle was also reflected in religious practice. Lowlanders sought mastery over this harsh environment by appeasing the spirits responsible for rain, fertility, fish, safe passage on the waters of the lake and rivers, and successful hunting and, especially, fishing. '[A]mong the people who are dependent on a particular craft for a livelihood, their religion extends to it, and not beyond', one early colonial missionary later noted. The fisherfolk on the lake

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[127] In Bugungu, '*itehe*' was used for 'land', but also 'soil, mud, dirt'; as was '*nsi*', though this word also conveyed certain more abstract notions such as earth, universe, world, and country.

[128] Samuel W. Baker, *The Albert N'yanza II* (London, 1866), p. 124. Chippindall, 'Journey', p. 68; Emin, *Die tagebücher Vol. 3*, pp. 386-387 (19 July 1887), Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, pp. 14-16; Arthur B. Thruston and Edmund H. Thruston, *African incidents* (London, 1900), p. 144; E. Barton Worthington, *A report on the fishing survey of lakes Albert and Kioga, March to July, 1928* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 63-65; Charles T. Wilson and Robert W. Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan, Vol. 1* (London, 1882), p. 333; Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, pp. 306-311; Mehmet Emin, *Die tagebücher von dr. Emin Pascha Vol. 2* (Hamburg, 1919), pp. 76, 148 (14 December 1879 and 11 November 1880); William Garstin, *Report upon the basin of the upper Nile, with proposals for the improvement of that river* (Cairo, 1904), p. 76; F.A. Dickinson, *Lake Victoria to Khartoum* (London, 1910), p. 45; Roscoe, *Bakitara*, p. 322.

[129] R.C.R. Owen, 'Precis of a Road Report from KIBERO to BURIGI and MASINDI', Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report No.1, Appendix D., 18 March 1901, UKNA, FO 2/804; Baker, *The Albert N'yanza II*, p. 133; Thruston and Thruston, *African Incidents*, p. 145.

[130] Romolo Gessi, *Seven years in the Soudan* (London, 1892), p. 313; Ints. Gungu 5a, 15a; J. Williams, quoted in H.H. Johnston, 18 April 1900 UKNA, FO 2/298.

'will do nothing to offend the spirit, for fear of misfortune in their fishing', he continued.[131] But there was marked eclecticism of religious practice in Bugungu. Cwezi-Kubandwa was present to a certain extent.[132] The family-level worship of ancestor spirits (*mizimu*) at man-made ancestor shrines – structures known as *kibbila* in Bugungu – was more prominent on the littoral than on the plateau of Bunyoro.[133] In Bugungu this practice was known as *kudya* (to regurgitate food for) or *kusala* (to cut/sacrifice).

Other forms of religious belief and practice involving hidden nodes of creative power were pre-eminent in Bugungu. The most significant, institutionalised form of ritual practice was *kulegeza* (to pray/sacrifice) or *kulaamansi* (to worship the earth), focused on propitiating deities known as *bihala* (sg. *kihala*). Some types of offerings – often of beads – were made on a quotidian basis to the lake and river,[134] where certain areas and times were forbidden to fish in due to ritual prohibitions.[135] But the most important rites were performed periodically by the clan's hereditary nature priest, the *mulegezi*, after gathering offerings from the inhabitants of the area. The *bihala* of the earth/nature (*nsi*) were propitiated by each priest at their clan's shrine – called a *mpuluma*, which was situated under a specific, physically imposing tree at the edges of the clan's area, where supernatural snakes appeared. Though most clans shared their one or more deities with one or more other clans, each clan had their individual *mpuluma*.

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[131] A.B. Fisher, 'Western Uganda', *The Geographical Journal* 24, no. 3 (1904), pp. 249-263 (p. 260).
[132] The scholarship's preponderant focus on this one form of religion is noted by Doyle, 'The Cwezi-kubandwa', p. 574. The interview Doyle cites to support his brief reference to *kulaamansi* occurred in Bugungu.
[133] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 93. For *kubembeka*, see J.H.M. Beattie, 'The Ghost Cult in Bunyoro', *Ethnology* 3, no. 2 (1964), pp. 127-151 (pp. 144-145).
[134] Baker, *Albert* p. 109. For a later reference, see Lloyd, *Uganda*, p. 163.
[135] Int. Gungu 17a.

Some deities associated with the lake and river demanded major sacrifices in or near the water, entailing multiple groups, possibly led by the priests of certain supposedly 'first-comer' clans.[136]

The shrines in the borderland of northern Bunyoro with the widest constituencies were associated with sites of extraordinary natural phenomena associated with the dramatic topography and geomorphology of the Northern Albertine Rift Valley. Perhaps the premier shrine in the wider region area was one located at the north-eastern limit of Bugungu at the waterfall at Pajao. The place and the male deity worshipped there was known as 'Muswa' (or 'Buswa') – son of 'Nyambogo'. Samuel Baker had named this feature of the landscape 'Murchison Falls' during his 1864 rash of symbolic appropriation (which also involved renaming Lake Mwitanzige as 'Lake Albert') but in his diary in 1872 he noted that 'the 'native name' for it was 'Mōosŏoār'.[137] The people of the plateau showed little knowledge or interest in this spectacular waterfall. Their distantiated, depersonalised relationship with it was reflected in their name for it, *kihirro kya bifuha*, which can be roughly translated as 'the sound of the snorting'.[138]

Ethnonymic practices and political subjectivities in Bugungu

Relationships to the environment and state authority intertwined; differences in ecological ethnicity and civic virtue were imbricated with political alterity. Bunyoro's component parts were incorporated into the body politic in different

[136] Ints. Gungu 6a; 18a; 19a; 20a;
[137] S.W. Baker diary, 28 March 1872, RGSA, SWB(1-4). Baker had written 'Mooshooa R.' in his diary during his previous visit, eight years earlier, presumably under the impression that it was the local name for the river. S.W. Baker diary, 2 May 1864, RGSA, SWB(1-4).
[138] H.K. Karubanga, *Bukya nibwira* (Nairobi, 1949), p. 25.

ways and to different degrees. For generations Bugungu had been nominally ruled, like the other *masaza* of Bunyoro, by princes from the Biito clan. Below them, in the hierarchy of state authority were certain individuals and lineages who were Nyoro-ised at least in the sense that they were tied to the state through a politics of personal loyalty, as recipients of the mukama's patronage bestowed in the form of low-level hereditary territorial chieftainships, retainerships, and membership of a special group called the *bajwara kondo*, the 'crown-wearers'.[139] But brief references made in the travelogues and diaries of travellers suggest that Bugungu, like 'Chopi' (Cope) to its east, was claimed by the bakama, but considered somehow separate. During his time in Bunyoro, information Speke received led him to describe '[B]Ugungu' as a 'dependency of Kamurasi'. The explorer applied the same 'dependency' category to 'Ganyi' – today considered Acholi – north-east of the Victoria Nile which he considered to be outside '[B]Unyoro'.[140] On the map that accompanied Speke's travelogue, 'Ugungu' appears within the boundaries of Unyoro; however, unlike any other parts of Bunyoro, the area was labelled, as if to imply a difference in status. In a table in Baker's diary, similarly, Mukama Kamurasi's northernmost territories 'Ugungu' and 'Chopi' are neatly delimited as though separate categories to 'Unyoro'.[141]

[139] Nyakatura, *Anatomy*, pp. 181-185.
[140] Speke, *Journal*, p. 467 (514). For the reference to 'Ganyi', see p. 242.
[141] Samuel Baker, Diary entry for 14 March 1864, RGSA, SWBP/1-4.

Figure 3: 'Map of the routes in eastern Africa between Zanzibar, the Great Lakes and the Nile explored and Surveyed by Captain J.H. Speke 1857-1863' (1863).[142]

Bunyoro's northern littoral was a politically liminal zone – on the edge of Bunyoro, but not fully part of it. The Nyoro state's interest in it tended to fluctuate. Much depended on the volume and type of trade that was being conducted at the north-western extremity of Bugungu in this period. Like centres across the water, it served as a commercial centre where goods from the lowlands and surrounding uplands were traded. Baker was informed in 1864 that in the years prior to his arrival Magungo had been 'a town of considerable importance'. He heard that cowrie shells and brass coil bracelets had been regularly brought from Zanzibar, via Karagwe far to the south-west, to be traded for ivory and prepared skins at this commercial centre. But the traders no longer came owing to an incident involving a 'disagreement with the people', in which 'some men were killed'.[143]

[142] John H. Speke 'Map of the routes in eastern Africa between Zanzibar, the Great Lakes and the Nile explored and Surveyed by Captain J.H. Speke 1857-1863', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 33 (1863), n.p..
[143] Baker, *Albert N'yanza*, p. 150.

The Nyoro state generally rested rather lightly on Bugungu: expecting little from, and offering even less, to its people. This arrangement was partly necessitated by the physical environment. The escarpment marked a dramatic change in the physical characteristics of the landscape, and the possibilities for agriculture. Like many people in Bunyoro, the residents of Bugungu still practiced shifting cultivation; the lowlands contained some more sympathetic micro-environments – such as near the intermittent watercourses and perennial rivers like the Waija (or Waiga) and Sambiye where vegetation cover thickened, and in the belt of slightly more elevated and fertile, stable soils in the east, where there was slightly more rain. Women cultivated the staples sweet potato (*Batatas edulis*), finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*) and *durrah* (a variety of sorghum) along with a variety of nuts and herbs. But it was hard to command tribute on the north-western periphery. Famine was a constant threat.[144] Its semi-arid shoreline and plains are among the lowest-lying and hottest parts of Uganda.[145] It lies in rainshadow and often experiences prolonged periods of drought.

But the Nyoro state also demanded little simply because it did not have the power to demand more. Lacking Buganda's infrastructure, like many other precolonial African cases, state power weakened closer to borders in Bunyoro. Bugungu was wedged between obstacles. The hippopotamuses, crocodiles, windstorms, and extensive papyrus islands of the Lake Albert and the Victoria Nile made Bugungu a difficult place to reach by water from the south. Traveling by land from the same direction, a challenge was presented by the vast expanse of riverine tropical high forests like Budongo, punctuated by imposing hills including Gisi and

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[144] Owen to Colvile 31 January 1894, PP C.7708; Shane Doyle Interviews nos. 25 and 26, SDP; Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, pp. 17-19, 80.
[145] Uganda Government, *Atlas of Uganda* (2nd ed. edn.; Kampala, 1967), p. 16.

Nyabuzaana the top of the escarpment. Below it the rainy season meant raging rivers, like the Waiga (Waija) and Waisoke, which run on an east-west axis from the elevated grounds just above the escarpment, descend the rift scarps and traverse the plains of the rift valley floor, before draining into the lake. The same geomorphology and topographic features, combined with shoreline woods, gullies, and ravines made it easy for people to hide or seek refuge.[146] People in Bugungu could vote with their canoes if obligations on them became overly burdensome. Fishers 'called Magango' who 'come from near the lake' were encountered by early European visitor as far along the upper Albert Nile as Pacora near Pakwac.[147]

The Nyoro state did not tolerate open rebellion, but signs of it were difficult to discern in Bugungu. Strong centrifugal forces operated in Bunyoro. Since the reign of *Mukama* Kyebambe III Nyamutukura (c. 1786–1835) the Cope area was a near constant source of concern for the Nyoro state. Royal rebel movements led by Kacope in Kihukya *saza* and Isagara Katiritiri in Kibanda were backed by a section of a local population with whom they were associated through upbringing and maternal line.[148] In the second quarter of the nineteenth century Bugungu had also been seen by ambitious Biito princes as fertile ground in which to raise rebellions. A rebellion in Bugungu was planned by the *saza* chief, Biito prince Karasuma Bugondo bwa Musuga; but he was outmanoeuvred and killed. Before

[146] Wilson and Felkin, *Uganda*, p. 315; Owen to Colvile, 31 January 1894, PP C.7708; Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, pp. 15, 19, 140. See also Thruston and Thruston, *African incidents*, p. 145.
[147] William H. Chippindall, 'Journey beyond the Cataracts of the Upper Nile Towards the Albert Nyanza', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 20, no. 1 (1875), pp. 67-69 (p. 68).
[148] Speke, *Journal*, p. 532 (2 October 1862); G. Casati, *Ten years in equatoria* (London, 1898), p. 209.

the passing of Nyamukutura's successor Nyabongo II Mugenyi in 1848, a second attempt to defy the mukama occurred in Bugungu when Mugenyi appointed his son Kamurasi to rule there. The late rebel Kacope's son Mpuhuka launched a rebellion in Bugungu.[149]

The attitude of the people of Bugungu to both royal rebels and rulers was highly ambivalent. Oral tradition suggests that some of the inhabitants of Bugungu did rise against the Nyoro state, but not behind Mpuhuka. As Kamurasi's forces were unable to reach Mpuhuka on his island redoubt, some of the people of Bugungu were raided in this rebel's stead. It was this action that caused them to 'rise', only to see their insurrection crushed by Kamurasi's mercenaries from Lango.[150] Bugungu soon became largely peripheral to the activities of Mpuhuka and the other the royal rebels. Mpuhuka based himself in Kihukya and the late Isagara's son Ruyonga in Kibanda. But the influence of both was dramatically restricted from about 1860, as their forces were routed and their property seized in the battle of Kokoitwa.[151] Their forces and they were subsequently forced to flee north of the river from their redoubts on small island amid the rapids on the Victoria Nile, a few days east of Murchison Falls. The people of Bugungu did not seem to want to take sides in these royal rivalries.

But in many respects Bugungu's ties to the Nyoro state were more tenuous than those of the Cope *masaza* to the east. Though strained by rebellion in this period, the relationship between the Palwo, on one hand, and the Nyoro ruling dynasty

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[149] Also rendered 'Pauka', 'Fowooka', and 'Fovoka'.
[150] H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* [Vol. 2] (London, 1902), p. 597; A. Tarantino, 'Lango wars', *UJ* 13, no. 2 (1949), pp. 230-235 (p. 233). Baker, *Albert*, p. 192; Nyakatura, *Anatomy* p. 92, 95-96. K.W., 'The Kings of Bunyoro-Kitara (Part III)', *UJ* 5, no. 2 (1937), pp. 53-84 (p. 60).
[151] Nyakatura, *Anatomy*, pp. 99-100

on the other, was conceived in terms of kinship, rooted in a shared deep past. These connections were still manifested in the persistence of the Lwo *mpako* praise names in Bunyoro, and in the sites of ritual and historical significance to the Biito dynasty scattered around north-eastern Bunyoro.[152] Until the a few generations previously, this special historical connection had been acknowledged through a privileged role in the *bukama*, beyond the usual personal ties.[153] The Palwo had been symbolically connected to the polity through a tradition of providing the 'queen mothers', who wielded considerable authority and patronage. [154] Efforts to increase the ideological hold of the bakama over the lowlands seems to have at times involved tapping into the power of the shrines, like that of Muswa at Pajao: the Nyoro state also appears to have, provided a sacrificial black bull, and even attended, periodic ceremonies for the deity there.[155]

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[152] Johnston, *Uganda*, p. 598; Beattie, *Nyoro State*, p. 113, 115

[153] For a reference to Mukama Kamurasi's 'Chopi officers' in the court, see Speke, *Journal*, p. 530 (1 October 1862).

[154] From about the eighteenth century, discontent grew among the Palwo when this privileged status was consistently denied to them, according to Ade Adefuye, 'Kabalega and the Palwo: A Conflict of Aspirations', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 8, no. 1 (1975), pp. 81-98. Some scholars have argued how much this long-running rebellion was secessionist in intent or an attempt to radically alter the terms of their incorporation For interpretations that cast doubt on the aims, see Renee Louise Tantala, 'The reign of Kyebambe IV Kamurasi, omukama of Bunyoro-Kitara, c. 1852-1869', unpublished MA dissertation (University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI, 1980), pp. 55-58; G. N. Uzoigwe, 'Kabalega and the Making of a New Kitara', *Tarikh* 3, no. 2 (1970), pp. 5-21 (p. 9). Many generations previously these fell under several separate polities – perhaps akin to what endured on the upper Albert Nile; but these had been destroyed as the Nyoro state attempting to bring under control.

[155] Ade Adefuye, 'Palwo Jogi: impact on political history', in J. B. Webster (ed.), *Chronology, migration and drought in interlacustrine Africa* (London; Halifax, 1979), pp. 215-230 (p. 225); Shane Doyle Interviews no. 27, SDP. The same pattern obtained in northern Bunyoro with regard to the regional non-Cwezi shrines, sites of actual or symbolic resistance as source of the authority of each *luganda*'s earth priest – inheritors of special powers over collective well-being in the lowlands. Similar acts of royal spiritual co-option were mirrored at Kibiro, south along the shoreline from Bugungu. See John Roscoe, *The Soul of Central Africa* (London, 1922), pp. 160-162; Roscoe, *Bakitara*, pp. 234-235, 25; Roscoe, *Northern*, pp. 77, 93.

But for the people of Bugungu, there was generally not the political or cultural symbolism or connection to mitigate their social and geographical marginality.

One possible sign of, and reason for, the lack of centralising state penetration in Bugungu was the persistence of particular patterns of social organisation. Agnatic lineages remained localised in Bugungu to a degree that was less typical above the Bunyoro escarpment, where a son 'goes anywhere'.[156] One early visitor reportedly interacted with a 'small tribe' near 'Magungo Mellisa' (Buliisa in Bugungu) known as the 'Wahinda' (likely what is now known as the Kindwa clan). He learnt that they 'spoke their own language, which differed from that spoken in the neighborhood', and had 'migrated from the north-east'. [157] The people of Bugungu were '*luganda* people'; the names of many localities, like Bukindwa, were derived from the name of the nganda (clan) that still dominated.[158] The senior man of the clan, or *muhandu wa luganda*, often maintained political prominence in terms of arbitration, punishment, and the land matters. Often these men served as chiefs below the rank of the *saza*.[159]

On an everyday basis, the *nganda* were far more relevant forms of self-identification than more encompassing categories such as Gungu, but the latter and certain other local collective identifications were heavily freighted with socio-political meaning. These categories were bound up with putative differences in assumptions about authority, hierarchy and politics. Some of these sorts of

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[156] For similar patterns elsewhere on the Lake Albert littoral, see J.H.M. Beattie, 'Tonya: a lakeside settlement in Bunyoro', in J. H. M. Beattie and R. G. Lienhardt (eds.), *Studies in social anthropology: essays in memory of E.E. Evans-Pritchard* (Oxford, 1975), (p. 38).
[157] Mehmet Emin, 'Zur Ethnologie de Gebiete um dem Albert-See II', *Das Ausland* 64, no. 18 (1891), pp. 351-355 (pp. 352-353).
[158] Int. Gungu 1a; Shane Doyle Interviews no. 25 and 26, SDP.
[159] Shane Doyle Interviews no. 27; Baker, *The Albert N'yanza II*, pp. 117-119.

categories had at least begun as generic and sometimes abusive social categories applied to certain clusters of peoples by outsiders. Though the meanings invested in these categories were to some extent malleable, some of the elements of this discourse – particularly stereotypes – were rather resilient and the labels themselves remained relatively stable. The ethnotoponymic 'Gungu' was connected to the verb *kugunguza* in Runyoro, which has been translated as 'to go off by oneself, be independent, rebellious'.[160] This disdain associated with this category above the plateau was reciprocated. The people of Bugungu seem to have seen themselves in contradistinction with the people they lumped together under the 'Ga[h]ya' category. That term carried a strong stigma as it connoted servility and slavishness; it was derived from a Lugungu verb *kugaya*, meaning 'to treat without respect'.[161] Emerging in relation to each other, these ethnic labels served as *indices* of political subjectivity.

Socio-cultural distance and difference had long been considered an unremarkable, and even useful fact of life. Bugungu was seen as a reservoir of men for the mukama's military. That is the way one of the most famous men from Bugungu, Wamara wa (son of) Mbunya, came to prominence, before being 'exiled' for becoming an 'undisciplined' 'rebel'.[162] An early colonial missionary noted that

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[160] Int. Gungu 3b2; Margaret Beatrice Davis, *A Lunyoro-Lunyankole-English and English-Lunyoro-Lunyankole Dictionary* (London, 1938), p. 38.
[161] The phrase '*Aga bagahya'* is still used to mean 'something inferior'. Also see David Lee Schoenbrun, 'Violence, Marginality, Scorn and Honour', in H. Médard and S. Doyle (eds.), *Slavery in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 38-75
(pp. 46, 61). See also Harry Hamilton Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, 2 vols. (2; London, 1902), p. 591. The term had shades of Buganda's Buddu, the 'land of slaves'.
[162] Ints. Gungu 4c, 4d, 8b; Nyakatura, *Anatomy* p. 157; Thruston and Thruston, *African Incidents*, p. 157; Thruston to Colvile, 11 Feb 1894, UNA, A2/3.

the 'men from Bugungu' had been the mukama's 'tribe of executioners',[163] possessing attributes that made them ideal warriors as one informant put it. This reputation as 'dangerous' sorts owed something to their prowess as spearmen and archers, but also their social distance. Their tendency to lack cumbersome ties of kinship and obligation on the plateau rendered the men of Bugungu useful to the mukama in terms of internal security and coercion.[164]

Civilisational nexus and intercalary: contested hierarchies

While populations from outside who settled on the plateau were quite readily assimilated,[165] little concerted effort had been made to spread Nyoro-Gahya culture to the peripheries. The Nyoro state, by contrast with Buganda, had lacked the capacity and the will to do this cultural work. Certain aspects of upland culture had spread to the north-western periphery through migration and chiefly tutelage. But on the whole, cultural distance remained and was maintained. Members of certain lineages incorporated into Nyoro state institutions appear to have internalised the cultural chauvinism of the plateau; they acquired and did not wear lightly the 'superior' Nyoro-Gahya ways, including the lingua franca of authority, Runyoro-Rugahya. These ways were markers of elite status, and functioned in the same way as prestige goods. The Lugungu tongue that

[163] Ruth B. Fisher, *Twilight Tales of the Black Baganda* (London, 1911), p. 167. It is possible these 'executioners' were the *babogora*, referred to in Beattie, *Nyoro State*, p. 128.
[164] Ints. Gungu 11, 15a; for a later reference see Casati, *Ten*, p. 307.
[165] Shane D. Doyle, 'Bunyoro and the demography of slavery debate: fertility, kinship and assimilation', in H. Médard and S. Doyle (eds.), *Slavery in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 231-251 (242).

dominated in Bugungu was not just any old 'dialect', contrary to the ethno-linguistic taxonomies of certain European visitors.[166]

Bugungu was liminal culturally as well as politically and bore the imprints of various, more active civilising projects. Over the course of its kaleidoscopic history, Bugungu had drawn in culturally diverse peoples from different directions. Most of the inhabitants of Bugungu spoke a language later classified as 'Bantu'. Some of the cultural traits of these people bore the imprint of the plateau society from which certain clans claimed origin.[167] Deep roots in and connections to the less centralised societies south-west of the lake were also perceptible in various forms. It is claimed through migration traditions of certain clans, but it is also suggested through the existence of many lexical items that are shared with Rwamba and Rukonzo, but not Runyoro-Rutooro, and the distinctive yodelling style of song was akin to the Twa forest people.[168] But lowland culture also bore the unmistakeable marks of the civilisational endeavours of Nilotic Lwo-speakers.[169] Forms of the latter's religious practice, such as worship at nature shrines, were ubiquitous, as were the lexical items relating to them: for example, -*legeza* (to sacrifice), -*laama* (to pray), and -*bbila* (shrine).[170] The names and sites of worship of the deities themselves – e.g. Muswa at Pajao – were also shared.[171] Even

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[166] For Emin's suggestions that the people of Bunyoro-Tooro, including those in Bugungu, all spoke mere dialects of 'Kinyoro', see Emin, *Die tagebücher Vol. 3*, p. 199 (6 March 1886, for reference to 'den Dialekt der Magungo bei Anfina sprach'), p. 204 (24th-30th May 1886); Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 180.
[167] Gungu5a; Shane Doyle Interviews, no. 25; and Koosya Bahoire, 'Kya Bagwera ba Kigwera Baluukuula', 28 June 2008, KBP.
[168] On the yodelling style of song, see Peter Cooke, 'Cultural greyout or survival of the species? - "the threat"', in T. Smith and M. O'suilleabhain (eds.), *Blas - the Local Accent in Irish Traditional Music* (Limerick, 1997), pp. 9-24 (pp. 13-14).
[169] Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson, *The Bantu languages* (London, 2003), p. 504.
[170] J. P. Crazzolara, *A Study of the Acooli Language* (London, 1938), p. 173, 286, 253.
[171] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, p. 308; Frank Knowles Girling, *The Acholi of Uganda* (London, 1960), p. 14; E. B. Clarke, 'A few customs of the Nilotes - Alur', 1927, OUL,

the coherence of clan settlement patterns to some extent reflected the influence of Nilotic societies characterised by large-scale extended lineages.[172]

This influence was hardly surprising. It was clear that the littoral cosmopolitanism which had created these cultures persisted. Different areas in this wider borderland area were associated with, and generally populated by, different groups in which the use of a certain language would predominate. But the followings of influential men were diverse. Polyglot settlements straddled the narrow waterways that separated ecologically similar zones, and individuals and small groups moved between them.[173] The small Nilotic Lwo-speaking polities of the upper Albert Nile Valley and on the western shore of Lake Albert fell within the Nyoro sphere of influence and dependence politically. Though the mukama did not appoint their rulers, they were ritually subordinate to him, posing no threat to the Nyoro state in and of themselves. There is no evidence of Kamurasi sending armed forces north of Bugungu. In the early 1860s these polities often sought to navigate politically between the mukama and his royal enemies in northern Bunyoro. Tellingly, rebellious soldiers from Bugungu like Wamara were

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RHL, Mss.Afr.s.795.9. For evidence of the root *-laama*'s presence—as the verb to 'pray, praise, worship; pray an imprecatory prayer' – in the language spoken in the putative cradleland of the Lwo people, see J. A. Heasty, *English-Shilluk, Shilluk-English Dictionary* (Dolieb Hill, 1974 [1937]). For evidence of a Bantu-ized Lwo term (*mulegezi*) being assimilated back into Lwo culture, see Alex Joseph Apecu, 'A Pre-colonial History of Jonam Chiefdoms', unpublished BA dissertation (Makerere University, 1972), p. 121. Also Int. Alur 4; Adefuye, 'Palwo jogi', pp. 217-218; Apecu, 'A Pre-colonial', p. 161 (endnote 36); Aidan W. Southall, 'Alur tradition and its historical significance', *UJ* 18, no. 2 (1954), pp. 137-65 (p. 150); Southall, 'Spirit possession and mediumship among the Alur', pp. 249-250; Michael Moses, 'A history of Wadelai [26 October 1901]', *UJ* 17, no. 1 (1953), pp. 78-80.

[172] These patterns were perceptible along the upper Albert Nile, and also among the Palwo (see Shane Doyle Interviews, no. 15, SDP).

[173] Gungu Int.1; Mehmet Emin, 'An exploring trip to Lake Albert', *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 3, no. 6 (1887), pp. 273-290 (p. 274).

exiled across the water, but slaves were only captured from beyond it by Nyoro rulers.[174]

But the people of these Lwo-speaking areas were culturally influential in spite of their political subordination. In the highly populated hills inland to the north-west of Lake Albert, the people of the Alur heartland polity of Okoro were regionally renowned for their 'proselytising culture'. Over the course of centuries, various other peoples had undergone the process of 'Alur-isation', as Alur princes had struck out on their own away from, but maintaining a degree of ritual subordination to Okoro, while establishing local ritual supremacy in neighbouring areas. This phenomenon was particularly apparent among the neighbouring less-centralised Lendu and Okebo societies to the west and south west. By contrast, owing partly to their proximity and links to the Nyoro state, the littoral area was almost entirely independent of Okoro's influence but revealed the consequences of its civilisational ambitions, and provided the medium through which its civilisers could move to Bugungu. The powerful political influence of the projects of Nilotic Lwo-speaking civilisers from the north were perceptible on the Nyoro plateau, but the cultural manifestations were far more obvious in Bugungu.

There was no simple ethnic hierarchy between peoples in Bugungu. Lwo-speaking ritual specialists seem to have enjoyed some prestige. One researcher in the 1960s heard from an old man that before the colonial era, '[t]he Alur people (...) gave

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[174] Emin Bey, 'Journal einer Reise von Mruli nach der Hauptstadt Unyoro's, mit Bemerkungen uber Land und Leute', *PGM* 25 (1879), pp. 220-224, 396-397; Mehmet Emin, *Die tagebücher von dr. Emin Pascha Vol. 3* (Hamburg, 1922), p. 417 (16 November 1887); Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 154. 18, 72, 97. See Mehmet Emin, *Die tagebücher von dr. Emin Pascha Vol.2* (Hamburg, 1919), pp. 284-285 (6 October 1877).

magic to the Bagungu. They rubbed the spears and hooks with herbs, and recited magic words'.[175] A certain cultural hauteur was demonstrated by certain Lwo-speaking interlopers in their use of the derogatory, derisive term *loduuni* (sg. *maduuni*), meaning 'small, round people' in reference to the Bantu-speakers of Bunyoro.[176]

But the stigma of slavery was attached to people from across the water. Most of the traffic into Bugungu related to the institution of slavery, which was important for the local labour supplies, as was often the case in the vicinity of trading centres. Oral sources attest to trade in both female and male Lendu and Alur slaves from the other side of the lake captured or purchased through the exchange of commodities, or pawned by their kin as security, or granted as compensation for offences.[177] The nature of the arrival of people from outside was indicated by the names of some of the *nganda*: Hambwa, meaning 'kidnapped'; Gwera was from the verb meaning to 'capture, enslave, force someone to have sex'. While incorporating and defining authority over women across the lake was now – and had probably always been – achieved through marriage, it seems male clients and slaves from across the lake were important additions to the family's labour supply,

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[175] Mary Jean Aerni, 'Man and wildlife in Uganda: A study of poaching and attitudes of local inhabitants towards wildlife in Uganda', p. 39, unpublished ms., RAC, RBF/RG4.1/Box 1008/ Folder 6129; Aidan W. Southall, 'Ethnic incorporation among the Alur', in R. Cohen and J. Middleton (eds.), *From Tribe to Nation in Africa* (Scranton, PA, 1970), pp. 71-92.
[176] Int. Gungu 4d; Joseph P. Crazzolara, 'Eine Reise nach Foweira zu den Lango', *Stern der Neger* 16 (March, 1913), pp. 49-54, continued in *Stern der Neger* 17 (April, 1913), pp. 73-79; and J.M. Onyankgo-ku-odongo and J.B. Webster, 'Jo Oma Pastoralists or Olar Cuji', in J.M. Onyankgo-ku-odongo and J.B. Webster (eds.), *The Central Lwo during the Aconya* (Nairobi, 1976), pp. 89-95 (93-94) (f.1). Cf. This meaning was not known by the first Europeans to note the word (recorded as 'Madundi'), which they believed it to be the ethnonym for a tribe 'spread along the banks of the banks of the Victoria Nile' by the 1880s.
[177] Int. Gungu 5a, 4d, 14c; Shane Doyle ints. 27 & 26, SDP.

but were ultimately assimilated into the locally dominant culture. Such was the 'moral degradation' associated with slavery that memory of its role in the history of certain lineages' arrivals in Bugungu was suppressed.[178]

Conclusion

Nyoro rulers generally showed little interest in Bugungu in the early 1860s. Demonstrations of great force were rare. The Nyoro state was unable and unwilling to project its power consistently over these amorphous margins. For Bunyoro's core population on the plateau, Bugungu was a space of alterity and degradation in regard to livelihoods, environment, language, and politics. But the putative civilisational hierarchies and stereotypes that structured upland ethnic thought were not accepted meekly in the lowlands, and loyalty to the Nyoro state was more questionable the more one moved away from the centralised core. In the absence of cultural and political integration with the Nyoro state it constituted a refuge for the rebellious, the desperate and the outcast, and, even if the locally dominant ways of being were lumped together as 'Gungu' by outsiders, remained heterogeneous and ambiguous, and determinedly plural in their spirituality, livelihoods as well as sense of self. This area represented one of what Igor Kopytoff termed 'ethnically ambiguous marginal societies' presenting 'a mishmash of regional cultural traits'.[179] Bugungu represented the meeting point of different civilising, proselytising projects, which interacted and imbricated, defying cultural homogenisation and political control.

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[178] Crazzolara, *A Study*, pp. xiv (fn. 1).
[179] Igor Kopytoff, 'The internal African frontier: The making of African political culture', in I. Kopytoff (ed.), *The African Frontier: the reproduction of traditional African societies* (Bloomington, 1987), pp. 3–86 (p. 4).

CHAPTER TWO: *Conquest and retribution: between the Mukama and the mujungu, c.1870-c.1899*

Deep-rooted discourses concerning inferiority and superiority, barbarism and civilisation found fresh salience as successive new political actors staked claims in Bugungu from the late 1860s to the late 1890s. New forces transformed the lowlands into part of a distinct political sphere – a space between more ambitious but over-stretched imperial projects, rather than merely at the edges of a rather indifferent one, as had previously been the case. This period in eastern Africa is generally seen as one of disruption and destruction – a characterisation that certainly holds true in the case of Bugungu. But prevailing analyses of the period, emphasising external intrusions and the consequent rise and fall of Bunyoro as regional hegemon, have tended to flatten the complexity of local peoples' engagements.[180] Older political, ideological and material bases, and ethno-civilisationalist biases – rather than just powerful leaders – facilitated the entry of these new foreign powers, and later functioned to perpetuate a cycle of retributive violence in Bugungu long after it ceased elsewhere.

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[180] This observation is in line with Cherry Leonardi, *Dealing with government in South Sudan: histories of chiefship, community & state* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2013), pp. 21-40.

Antecedents of occupation: traders, slavers and governors from the north

From the early 1860s, traders and slavers from far to the north wrought devastation in Bunyoro, particularly the areas south-east and north-east of Bugungu. Known as 'Khartoumers', after the city of the Turco-Egyptian empire from which their force emanated, many of these people were in the employ of a trading company called Aqaad. This firm operated a network of lightly fortified trading posts, or *zariba*s. From a post at Patiko, dozens of kilometres to the north of the borderlands, the firm had expanded its operations into Bunyoro, with considerable violence.[181] It was owing to the nature of these early encounters that the British explorer Samuel Baker – another foreigner arriving in Bunyoro from the north – was received with apprehensiveness by Mukama Kamurasi in 1864. Aqaad and other companies increasingly complemented their quest for ivory with slave-taking. Bugungu was not untouched by such raiding, but its impact was far greater in Cope *masaza*, especially far to the east on the river around the Pawiir, where the Khartoumers maintained a small slave *zariba*. Nyoro rulers and pretenders recognised the potential utility of these men and their firepower. In 1869-1871, Khartoumers in the employ of Aqaad involved themselves on both sides of the succession war through which Kabaleega, a son of Kamurasi, came to power.[182]

As governor of the new Equatoria province of the expansionist Turco-Egyptian empire, Samuel Baker intervened in this situation in 1872. He had been

[181] Baker, *Albert N'yanza II*, p. 34.
[182] Baker, *Ismailia* pp. 136, 153, 282-283, 322, 361-5, 379-80; S. Baker diary entry for 24 March 1872, RGSA, SWB/4. Pawiir was at the time rendered 'Foweira'.

commissioned to establish Turco-Egyptian rule – under the rhetorical guise of a humanitarian anti-slaving mission – in the equatorial lakes region of central-eastern Africa by the ruler of Egypt, the *Khedive* Ismail. But Baker's intrusion was resisted in Bunyoro. His maladroit and brusque efforts to convince Kabaleega to submit resulted in violence at Masindi in May 1872, forcing Baker to beat a hasty retreat north-east from the Bunyoro plateau. At Pawiir he rather ineffectually declared Kabaleega's rival Ruyonga king of Bunyoro, stationing Turco-Egyptian forces with him. With additional assistance from mercenaries from Lango, Ruyonga appears to have won some early victories against Kabaleega after Baker's departure for Egypt a few months into 1873. Baker also sent a detachment of irregulars to Bugungu.[183]

Bugungu held special significance for the fundamentally riverine Turco-Egyptian imperial operation. This littoral zone featured particularly prominently in Baker's short-lived visions of a Turco-Egyptian Bunyoro in 1872-1873. During Baker's visit in 1864 he had encountered the once-thriving commercial hub at a locality he believed to be called 'Magungo' or 'Magungu', located at Bugungu's northwestern tip, where the Victoria Nile meets Lake Albert. Baker imagined Magungo as Bunyoro's 'principal station'– a trading post for transhipment of ivory from Bunyoro and adjacent territories, to extant stations in Sudan - diverting trade from the Zanzibar route. A station at Magungo would enable easy exploration of the lake, which at the time he believed stretched much further south, and directly connected with Lake Tanganyika. It would also play a part in the projected

[183] Baker, *Ismailia*, pp. 271, 290, 330, 388, 422, 432; S. Baker diary entries for March 1873, RGSA, SWB/4

advance to Buganda.[184] But there seems to have been little official enthusiasm or further support from Khartoum for the incorporation of Bunyoro. A year elapsed between the end of Baker's service and the arrival of his successor Charles Gordon in Khartoum in 1874. If it occurred at all, the occupation of Magungo by Turco-Egyptian forces under Baker's governorship was only fleeting. To Gordon's envoys, visiting en route to Buganda in 1874-1875, Ruyonga in Cope cut a forlorn figure, having been abandoned by most of his followers. In Baker's view, Ruyonga was 'not properly supported' by the Turco-Egyptian troops.[185]

Gordon gradually revived and developed Baker's plans for Bunyoro. He reinforced the post at Pawiir, and by October 1875 had developed plans for a chain of military stations which would secure Turco-Egyptian personnel and communications and assert territorial dominance.[186] In Gordon's plan, Magungo was to be the terminus of the riverine transportation along the Albert Nile from Dufile; from there, transport would be overland – circumventing Murchison and Karuma falls via several inland posts before traveling via the Nile to Lake Victoria from Pawir.[187] Coloured by Baker's enduring and extreme public animosity towards Kabaleega, Gordon developed plans to depose him as Mukama and install one of the royal pretenders in his stead.[188] To Gordon's envoy Linant in early 1875, Ruyonga was no longer a suitable substitute. Politically and militarily

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[184] S. Baker diary entry for 31 March 1872, RGSA, SWB/4; 'Sir Samuel Baker's report to the viceroy', 1 September 1873, UKNA, FO 84/1371;
[185] Baker to Gordon, 8 July 1875, BL, Add MS 51305, f.68
[186] Gordon to Nugent, 19 October 1875, IWMA, Misc.385.
[187] Gordon to Khairy Pasha, 1 May 1876, reproduced in M.F. Shukry, *Equatoria under Egyptian rule* (Cairo, 1953), p. 334. Inland posts were located at 'Keroto' (Kikorota), 'Londu' (Lendu), Masindi, and 'Kisoga' (Kisuga). Gordon also envisioned two other shoreline forts besides Magungo south along Lake Albert's eastern shore, including one at 'Chibero' (Kibiro).
[188] John Gray, 'Afina Mupena', CUL, RCSA/126/3/17; and 'Gordon's plan to capture Kabarega in 1876', CUL, RCSA/126/3/14; Emin, *Tagebücher I*, p. 183 (1 October 1876).

he appeared something of a spent force. By contrast, Linant was impressed by a royal rebel called Mupina, who he encountered fresh from a highly successful raid on Kabaleega's supporters.[189] Mupina was the brother of Kamurasi's enemy Mpuhuka, who had passed away in around 1870.[190] He had taken charge to the west of Ruyonga; Linant reported that Mupina's 'power extends as far as the mouth of Lake Albert'.[191]

But this was something of a half-truth. To the east of the proposed Fort Magungo, Mupina had some influence as a result of alliances he had cultivated with certain caravans.[192] But similar alliances had brought Kabaleega to power, and enabled him to consolidate and extend his authority. He excelled in this gatekeeping role with foreign traders. By exercising a royal prerogative over guns and ivory Kabaleega became less reliant on internal revenues in the form of tribute, and therefore less beholden to his people and over-mighty subjects. At the same time, through innovations in the forms of a standing army and military chiefship, the increasingly authoritarian Kabaleega was more able to extract such taxes by coercion.[193]

Though Ruyonga and the Turco-Egyptians were consolidating control in the north-eastern borderlands at this time, Kabaleega still held influence in Bugungu and the wider north-western borderlands. After establishing another riverine fort at 'Mruli' (Buruli) upriver of Pawiir, Gordon in early 1876 sent Italians Romolo

[189] Shukry, *Equatoria*, p. 27; Ernest Linant De Bellefonds, 'Itinéraire et Notes', *BTSGKC* 1 (1876), pp. 1-104.
[190] John Gray, 'Afina Mupena', CUL, RCMS/126/3/17.
[191] Linant to Gordon, 25 March 1875, in Shukry, *Equatoria*, p. 27
[192] Ade Adefuye, 'Kabalega and the Palwo: A Conflict of Aspirations', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 8, no. 1 (1975), pp. 81-98.
[193] Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 42-57.

Gessi and Carlo Piaggia, accompanied by two officers and twenty regular troops, to make the first passage of the Albert Nile from Dufile to Magungo, where they were to deliver munitions and stores required for the new station.[194] By that time, even in Koc ('Wadelai'/'Wod Lei'), far to the north of Bugungu along the Albert Nile, the powerful ruler there was 'vassal' to Kabaleega, according to Gessi; every couple of months the chief sent Kabaleega 'all the ivory he collected' – an undertaking involving 'two or three hundred bearers' each time.[195]

On their arrival on the Victoria Nile in late March, Gessi's attempts to reach the site of the proposed fort were hampered by the presence of 'a party of disbanded soldiers' of Kabaleega. Faced with hostility along much of the Victoria Nile, Gessi was obliged to sail almost as far along the Victoria Nile as Murchison Falls – closer to Mupina's headquarters – in order to find a chief who had accepted the authority of the Turco-Egyptian government. Only through this chief was Gessi able to pass on orders to the local commander Wat-el-Mek to secure the area.[196] Gordon was forced to concede that Kabaleega was a 'very powerful Sheikh',[197] and scaled down his ambitions accordingly, hoping that the potentate would 'come to terms and accept [to remain with] half of his kingdom' with Ruyonga and Mupina occupying the other two quarters.[198]

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[194] Carlo Piaggia, 'Sesto Viaggio di Carlo Piaggia sul Fiume Bianco Nel 1876 (I)', *BdSGI* 14 (1877), pp. 380-390.
[195] Romolo Gessi, *Seven years in the Soudan* (London, 1892), p. 106.
[196] Romolo Gessi, 'On the Circumnavigation of the Albert Nyanza', *PRGS* 21, no. 1 (1876), pp. 50-56 (p. 51).
[197] Gordon to Khairy Pasha, 1 May 1876, in Shukry, *Equatoria*, p. 334.
[198] Charles E. Gordon, 'The Khedive's Expedition to the Lake Districts', *PRGS* 21, no. 1 (1876), pp. 56-63.

'Fort Magungo': the politics of Turco-Egyptian occupation on the Northern Albertine frontier

The nature and extent of the influence the Turco-Egyptian administration went on to achieve is difficult to gauge. Some lowlanders no doubt felt compelled to distance themselves politically and physically from this foreign power. The local inhabitants had various sound historical reasons to object to these foreign forces; many of the Turco-Egyptian 'soldiers' had worked for Aqaad's slavers. Moreover, some people from Bugungu remained firmly allied with the Nyoro ruling dynasty. Among these men was Rukaara Mwanga Kanagwa of the Cwa clan, who was a chief in the south-eastern hinterlands of Bugungu. Kanagwa, or his father, had been made a *mujwara kondo.*[199] The lines of Gordon's 'rough' cartographic representation of the territorial extent of the encompassing administrative unit suggested authority stretching almost to the core of Bunyoro; the true extent was certainly more modest.

[199] Interview with George Rwakaikara, 20 October 1968, CRL, EISP/B/8; Interview with Festo Mugenyi, 20 October 1968, CRL, EISP/B/9; Pearson to Wright, 23 January 1879, in 'The Journey up the Nile to Uganda', *CMI* 39, no. 5 (1880), pp. 33-42 (p. 39).Cf. John Nyakatura, *Aspects of Bunyoro customs* (Nairobi, 1970), p. 92; P. Bikunya, *Ky'Abakama ba Bunyoro* (London, 1927), p. 52.

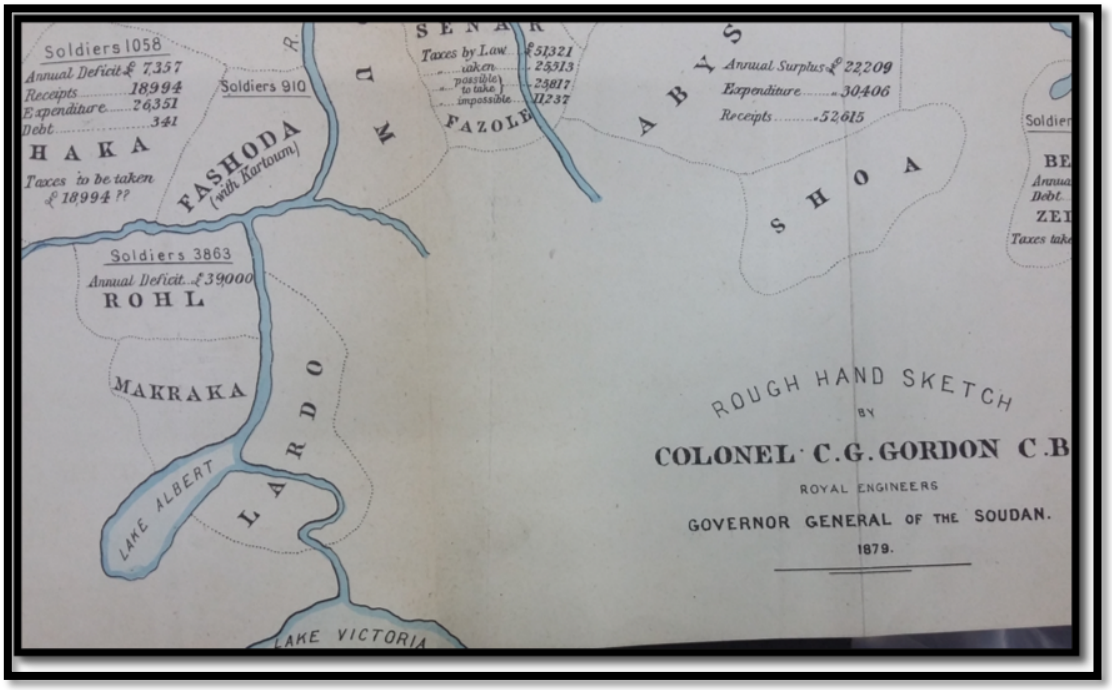

Figure 4: 'Rough hand sketch by Colonel C.G. Gordon', 1879.[200]

But the inhabitants of the lowlands did not simply experience the occupation as victims. The Turco-Egyptian presence brought not only disruption and destruction, but also opportunity for the building of local power and influence. On the peripheries of the area over which the Turco-Egyptians asserted territorial dominance it was possible, at least at times, for certain big men to adopt an explicitly neutral 'independent' position. But most of the Turco-Egyptian local connections were less ambiguous; the Turco-Egyptian government secured a foothold in the lowlands primarily by supporting Kabaleega's defiant rival kinsmen and their followers. Through its military power and its patronage resources, Fort Magungo bolstered the nearest pretender Mupina – to the point that he was considered by one of Gordon's men to be 'chief of the whole of the

[200] From UKNA, FO 78/3191.

Magungo and Shifalu [Palwo] districts, as well as ruler of a part of the Lango country'.[201]

But the Turco-Egyptian administration also built alliances with less well-known men – local big men and their followers – by affording them protection of the imperial power. Certain commoners had reason to embrace rather than simply acquiesce to the alien intruders. One such individual was Wamara, a military leader from Bugungu who had been exiled by Kamurasi.[202] Wamara was not the only person with historical grievances against the ruling Nyoro dynasty and recognised the potential advantages of collaborating with the Turco-Egyptian project. Acting as Wamara's 'most trusted and confidential adviser', was one Kiiza Kakungulu whose father had been killed by Kabaleega.[203]

The allegiance of others was won through demonstrations of Turco-Egyptian magnanimity, power, and commodities. Chiefs formerly in the service of Kabaleega in Bugungu were spared execution at Mupina's hands due to the intervention of Gordon's men. After Gessi returned to Magungo in early-to-mid April 1876 and hoisted the Egyptian flag at the *zariba* by the lake in a ceremony marked by 'the firing of guns and the holding of court to pay homage to the Flag'. Gessi reported to Gordon that around the fort itself, the annexation of the lowlands in April 1876, had been 'made in the presence of native inhabitants (...) without the slightest resistance'. [204] After some initial mistrust, some were won

[201] Mehmet Emin, 'Reisen in Äquatorial-afrika, 1877', *PGM* 24 (1878), pp. 217-228, 368-277; Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 21.
[202] Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, p. 209 (31 May 1886).
[203] William J. Ansorge*, Under the African sun* (London, 1899), pp. 169-171; Cecil F.S. Vandeleur, *Campaigning on the upper Nile and Niger* (London, 1898), p. 28; Wilhelm Junker, *Travels in Africa during the Years 1882-1886* (London, 1892), p. 470.
[204] Gessi, *Seven*, pp. 120-123; Gordon to Dorothy, 5 August 1876 BL, Add. Ms 51293.

over by 'gifts of clothing, swords, and bottles of wine' and were 'very happy and at ease'.[205] On a visit to Magungo in mid-1876, Gordon described the local people as 'quiet and well-disposed to us' and witnessed various previously hostile elements submitting to the Turco-Egyptian government.[206] A year later, Gordon's envoy, the German Mehmet Emin, reported that 'many negroes are now subjects of the station', as its 'territory has increased'.[207] Bugungu's relationship with the Turco-Egyptian administration was given space to develop in part because relations between the latter and Kabaleega were peaceful for a short period between 1877 and 1878. Emin achieved this rapprochement through careful diplomacy: he spent over a month as an envoy at Kabaleega's court and agreed to pay an annual grant in gifts or money, and to terminate Turco-Egyptian support for Mupina and Ruyonga.[208]

The geographical focus of the Turco-Egyptian administration in Bugungu around this time shifted slightly, bringing new communities within the orbit of the station. As Gordon had long planned, the administration moved the station upriver to the east between 1877 and 1878, as it had been being washed away and had become 'damp and unhealthy'.[209] The second iteration of the fort was established several miles further up the Victoria Nile on a hill above one of the few suitable landing stages.[210] In its second iteration, the station consisted of a 'clean and well-built

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[205] Ibrahim Fawzi, *The History of the Sudan between the times of Gordon and Kitchener* (Mafraq, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1997), p. 15, 19.
[206] Gordon to his sister, 28 July 1876, BL, Add.Ms 51293, f.202; Gordon to Stanton, 1 August 1876, in Charles G. Gordon, 'Unpublished letters of Charles George Gordon', *SNR* 10 (1927), pp. 1-59 (48-49).
[207] Emin, *Tagebücher* 1, p. 225 (25 July 1877).
[208] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 49.
[209] Emin, *Tagebücher* 1, p. 225 (25 July 1877); Gordon to Stanton, 28 July 1876, in Charles G. Gordon, 'Unpublished letters of Chares George Gordon', *SNR* 10 (1927), pp. 1-59 (48-49).
[210] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 15.

town', according to one passing missionary.[211] The area of this second fort became known locally as 'Khartoum'.[212]

Fort Magungo in both iterations represented something of a social and commercial hub for the 'friendly' villages. Troops received poultry and ivory from local people in exchange for yellow copper, beads, and white shells. [213] Villages provided the Turco-Egyptian forces with water and porters, and even interpreters.[214] The Khedive's men at times clearly held sway among, and offered protection to, the lowlanders for some distance beyond the perimeter of the station.[215] Europeans had sustained interactions with certain lowlanders. Emin recorded some of their fables and migration traditions, later published in a German magazine.[216] A visiting Austrian, Richard Buchta, in early 1879 captured certain individuals on camera, labelling these photographs with the ethnonym 'Magungo', as opposed to the 'Wanyoro' and 'Dschafalu' (Palwo) he encountered elsewhere.

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[211] Charles Thomas Wilson and Robert William Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Soudan, Vol.1* (London, 1882), 313.
[212] Emin, *Tagebücher 3* p. (8 June 1888). The name is still widely used for this locality today.
[213] Fawzi, *The history*, pp. 19-20; Emin *Tagebücher 1*, p. 184 (4 October 1876); Gessi, *Seven*, p. 120.
[214] Schweinfurth (ed.), *EPCA*, p. 18; Casati, *Ten*, p. 312.
[215] Schweinfurth (ed.) *EPCA*, p. 17, 140.
[216] Mehmet Emin, 'Negerfabeln', *Das Ausland* 63, no. 35 (1890), pp. 681-684; Mehmet Emin, 'Zur Ethnologie de Gebiete um dem Albert-See II', *Das Ausland* 64, no. 18 (1891), pp. 351-355.

Figure 5: '68. Wanyoro- Mädchen'.[217]

Figure 6: 72. '71 Magungo-Mädchen' and '72. Magungo-Neger'.[218]

[217] Richard Buchta, *Die Oberen Nil-Lande : Volkstypen und Landschaften* (Berlin, 1881), n. p.
[218] Richard Buchta, *Die Oberen Nil-Lande : Volkstypen und Landschaften* (Berlin, 1881), n. p.

Figure 7: '61.Dschafalu-Neger'.[219]

Kabaleega was merely biding his time and he was soon vindicated in this decision. In early 1879 Gordon, by now Governor General, decided that the cost of the stations was insupportable and the vision of expansion unattainable. [220] Khedival insolvency had been increasingly accompanied by local insecurity. The Turco-Egyptian government had failed to cut ties with the rebel princes, much to Kabaleega's dissatisfaction. Emin's casual reference to a raid on Fort Magungu by Kabaleega's soldiers around October 1879, suggests that these were routine occurrences by that time, as do measures to bolster the station's defences. [221] The fort was protected by a strong earthwork fortification, a moat ten feet in depth, a

[219] Richard Buchta, *Die Oberen Nil-Lander: Volkstypen und Landschaften* (Berlin, 1881), n. p.
[220] Gordon to Wright, 9 Feb 1879, CRL, CMS, A6/O/11/7
[221] Emin, *Tagebücher* 2, p. 67 (18-19 November 1879); Dorothy Middleton (ed.), *The diary of A. J. Mounteney Jephson: Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, 1887-1889* (London, 1969), p. 265.

field-gun and two rocket-tubes, along with sentries and a chain of outposts. Such measures were necessary as the area was 'coveted' by Kabaleega, as Felkin put it.[222] The garrison generated local hostility by growing increasingly unruly; they were wont to overstep at stations remote from control of the governors, increasingly ill-supplied with trade goods, and located in areas poorly endowed with grain for requisitions. Aside from the 'dirt' and 'disorder', Emin learnt of 'great irregularities' at Fort Magungo. The garrison had launched raids above the escarpment against some of Kabaleega's people, and the station commander had attacked a 'friendly village' near the fort, shooting four women and one man. [223] The Governor of Equatoria, Emin, after some delay, finally carried out the evacuation of Magungo and the other stations in the borderlands in November 1879.

Rebellion and retribution post-occupation, 1880-1894

Regardless of the tenor of its conclusion, the flirtation between Bugungu and the Turco-Egyptian imperial project had deepened Nyoro state and society's sense of the former's marginality and menace. The events of the years that followed the 1879 withdrawal of the Turco-Egyptian garrisons shed further light on the changing nature of the relationship between the lowlands and the Nyoro state. Kabaleega immediately re-asserted his claim over Bugungu at the end of 1879. Within a couple of weeks of the Turco-Egyptian withdrawal, the Nyoro potentate's troops had taken control of the abandoned Fort Magungu.[224] This station became a focal point in the struggle for Bugungu both for its strategic

[222] Wilson and Felkin, *Uganda*, p. 313.
[223] Pearson to Wright, 23 January 1879 in 'Journey'.
[224] Emin, *Tagebücher* 2, p. 70 (4 December 1879).

position and, possibly, for its symbolism. '[M]assacres of friendlies' occurred across the borderlands the Turco-Egyptian government had abandoned.[225] Fearing the prospect of being brought to reckoning by Kabaleega, locals such as chief Wamara and his multi-ethnic, polyglot following fled across the water to Panyigoro on the Albert Nile.[226]

But this was only the beginning of Bugungu's troubles, as the lowlands had not been abandoned for good. Successive phases of re-encroachment and retrenchment by the Turco-Egyptian project spurred further violence and displacement. Bugungu did not cease to be a space of princely insurgence and Turco-Egyptian interest and influence. Wamara was to remain at least loosely allied to the Equatoria project from his position on the Albert Nile for about eight years. Governors-general who succeeded Gordon after 1880 largely ignored Equatoria. But Emin took the opportunity to re-establish a presence, albeit rather slight, in the form of two stations east of Bugungu on the Victoria Nile which were maintained until April 1884, when he was forced to concentrate his forces in the wake of the Mahdist rising in Sudan. Warfare in the lowlands resumed, only now with the royal renegades – Mupina, and Ruyonga's heir Kamissoa (or Kamuswa) – also fighting each other. Emin heard reports that owing to the violence, his old route from the Fort Magungo to the inland plateau Fort Kikoroto had been 'completely abandoned by residents and become a great forest'.[227] Mupina's power was somewhat diminished in the absence of Turco-Egyptian patronage and

[225] Maddocks to unknown, 30 August 1895, UNA, A4/2.
[226] Emin, *Tagebücher* 2, p. 160 (28 November 1880); *Tagebücher* 3, p. 209 (31 May 1886); 'An exploring trip to Lake Albert', *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 3, no. 6 (1887), pp. 273-290 (p. 274).
[227] Emin, *Tagebücher* 3, p. 6 (15 August 1884).

protection.[228] But his men remained a threat very near the lake, where they reportedly launched a successful attack on Kabaleega's men in October 1885.[229] Mupina maintained communications with Emin, whose troops remained nearby. As long as these rebel princes survived, they remained a beacon for malcontents, outcasts and the disaffected, and gave Kabaleega cause for concern.

Maintaining ties with the littoral borderlands remained essential for Emin owing to the riverine nature of the Turco-Egyptian empire. With communication northward along the Nile cut off from mid-1885 to 1886, Emin turned to Lake Albert for a southward route. Building upon extant relationships, Emin came to rely heavily on the littoral chiefdoms across the water from the lowlands. Using the two steamers at his disposal Emin founded one station near the village of Mahagi, on the north-western lakeshore; two further south, on the western shore; and one down the Albert Nile at Wadelai. For a short time Emin and Kabaleega turned to one another after a four-year lapse in communication. Embroiled in a war against Buganda's new ruler, Kabaleega had little choice but to tolerate Emin's moves. Following an invitation from Kabaleega six months earlier, Emin's Italian assistant Casati was welcomed in central Bunyoro as a representative in June 1886. But relations rapidly soured.

The matter of control of Bugungu, and the northern borderlands more broadly, came to a head in 1887-1888. After Mupina passed away in early 1887, Kabaleega attempted to assert his authority up to and beyond the Victoria Nile, anxious to eliminate the threat of Emin. Operating from the (second) abandoned fort and on

[228] Junker, *Travels*, pp. 439, 466, 469-470.
[229] Emin, *Tagebücher* 3, p. 59 (14 November 1884, in reference to 'Magungo Mlissa' near modern-day Buliisa Town); Junker, *Travels*, p. 465.

the north bank nearby in a locality known as Kinyamwesi, one of Kabaleega's military leaders called Rukaara sought to mobilise people to attack the remaining Turco-Egyptian forts. He cast around for support in March 1887, targeting Emin's chiefly allies in the Albert Nile Valley including the exiled Wamara – and the neighbours of the increasingly oppressive garrison to the north at Patiko.[230] Kabaleega's forces also launched attacks to the east in April 1887 on the Victoria Nile against the people of Mupina's son, Kacope Okwir Kamurasi, who had assumed the royal rebel mantle.[231]

The riparian lowlands bore the brunt of Emin's mid-May 1887 reaction to this encroachment. On hearing that Kabaleega planned an assault on the remaining Turco-Egyptian forces to the north. Emin despatched two steamers, including the 108-ton *Khedive* to the old station of Magungo to 'cleanse' the south bank of the 'lying scum'. Supported by the forces of the rebel princes, the Turco-Egyptian assault reportedly killed 'some natives' and the barasura in the vicinity of the landing site at Kyonga, drove out Rukaara and razed his village, and destroyed five vessels nearby before moving closer to Murchison Falls where they exchanged fire with one of Kabaleega's large new boats which was attempting to cross to the north bank.[232] Repelled by the combined forces of Emin and the dissident princes, Kabaleega set out to end the latter's resistance, through 'definite occupation of the countries on the Victoria Nile'.[233]

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[230] Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, p. 322 (6 March 1887).
[231] Casati, *Ten*, p. 278; Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, p. 331 (2-3 April 1887), p. 332 (6 April 1887), p. 341 (24 April 1887), and pp. 341-342 (27 April 1887).
[232] Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, p.346 (9 May 1887), pp. 348-350 (19-31 May 1887), pp. 348-352 (6-19 June 1887)
[233] Casati, *Ten*, p. 287.

The Nyoro state eventually took control of Bugungu with a ferocity indicative of the ever-intensifying distrust and contempt with which Kabaleega had come to view this peripheral zone, especially since the Turco-Egyptian occupation. All the while sending 'the usual professions of friendship' to Emin, the Mukama tightened his grip on the borderlands. Some of those loyal to Emin were executed or imprisoned;[234] others switched allegiance in the absence of consistent material Turco-Egyptian backing. Those who failed to join hands with the Mukama were shown no mercy by the 'great concourse of negroes' who assembled under Rukara at the abandoned Fort Magungo in July 1887. Over the rest of the year these men defeated and killed the royal rebels, and 'devastated' Bugungu and Cope, forcing many to flee across the water.[235] Emin had continued to receive tribute from 'people from Magungo' even as late as November 1887.[236] But Bugungu had been firmly reincorporated, and heavily militarised by the Nyoro state by mid-January 1888, when Casati, banished by the Mukama, barely escaped through the lowlands with his life. [237] As was the case in Cope, some rebels were executed, some were conscripted into Kabaleega's professional army, known as the *barusura*, and others forcefully relocated to central district of Bugahya.[238]

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[234] Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, p. 346 (9 May 1887), p. 351 (10 June 1887)
[235] Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, pp. 353-354 (20-26 June 1887), and p. 365 (5 July 1887); Gessi, *Seven*, p. 287; G. Wilson, 'Appendix B: Report on the legends, history, and people of UNYORO', Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Reports, no. 12, April 1902, UKNA, FO 2/804; Johnston, *Uganda*, p. 592; Junker, *Travels*, p. 570, 592.
[236] Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, p. 422 (16, 19-20 November 1887).
[237] Casati, *Ten*, pp. 308-310; Vita Hassan, *Die Wahrheit über Emin Pascha* (Berlin, 1893), pp. 127-132. The Italian had been imprisoned due to his maladroit meddling in factional politics in Bugahya and the general deterioration of Turco-Nyoro relations.
[238] For details regarding Acanda Kasemire Elizabeth, mother of Kabaleega's son Mukama Tito Gafabusa Winyi, see 'About people and happenings', *Uganda Herald*, 20 January 1953; and Adefuye, 'Kabalega', pp. 96-98.

The violence intensified the usual flows of people across the waterways, throwing into sharp relief the diversity of the different component parts of northern Bunyoro's borderlands. Lwo-speakers from the vicinity of Fort Patiko, took refuge on the south bank of the Victoria Nile. A 'strong colony of Shooli' (Acholi) had established itself in a locality known as Padiri near the abandoned fort Magungo under Rukaara's authority in a bid to escape the 'oppressions and sufferings' of the Turco-Egyptian garrison. Other groups had taken refuge elsewhere on the plains and further south along the shoreline after fleeing Mahagi across the lake. Casati encountered in Bugungu 'a village of Lur and Lendu', including one man who had previously served as an interpreter for the late commander of Fort Magungu.[239]

The devastation was compounded in mid-1888 when the Turco-Egyptian forces themselves turned against Bugungu. At this time Emin felt intense pressure, hearing rumours circulating that Rukaara was recruiting for an offensive against his severely diminished strongholds to the north. Even his own soldiers on the lakeshore and along the Albert Nile agitated against him, concerned by the implications of Stanley's relief expedition, which arrived in April 1888.[240] After Emin launched an indiscriminate attack on Kibiro the next month partly in retribution for Casati's treatment, in July one of his commanders sacked and destroyed 'all the villages on the coast of Magungo', including the headquarters of both Rukaara and Wamara, and captured several prisoners.[241] Emin's vengeful

[239] Casati, *Ten*, p. 261, 311-312; and Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, p. 351 (7-8 June 1887), p. 302 (6 August 1887); Emin, *Tagebücher 4*, p. 4 (12 January 1988).
[240] Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, pp. 450-451 (7 Jan 1888); Emin, *Tagebücher 4*, pp. 27-29 (4 Feb 1888).
[241] The episode redacted from Emin's diary, as is noted in John Milner Gray, 'The Diaries of Emin Pasha- Extracts XI', *UJ* 30, no. 2 (1966), pp. 191-200 (pp. 196-197). But it is described in harrowing detail by Casati, *Ten*, pp. 341-342. For the Bugungu

violence was to be the final significant event in the Northern Albertine borderlands before the Turco-Egyptian empire's permanent departure.

No man's land: collective punishment, between the British and Kabaleega, 1894-1899

Bugungu's reincorporation by Kabaleega's Nyoro state proved ephemeral. Within just a few years of the final retreat of the Turco-Egyptian empire, Kabaleega's expansionism encountered that of the British. British interests initially took the form of the Imperial British East African Company (IBEAC), which had been granted a charter by the British government to develop trade in the region. The Company's intrusion into the Great Lakes was led by the indomitable Frederick Lugard, already fiercely antipathetic toward Kabaleega, owing partly to the biases of accounts heard in Buganda, which he had recently convinced to submit to British overrule. Lugard came to Bunyoro unauthorised. Aiming to enlist the troops formerly in the service of Emin, he found himself in battle against Kabaleega's forces in 1891 in Bunyoro's recently reconquered southwesternmost territories. Emerging victorious, Lugard proceeded to restore Tooro's independence from Kabaleega and install an exiled prince as the Mukama. Lugard established several large Sudanese garrisons in southern Bunyoro to defend his client polity against Kabaleega.

The British government stepped in to take over in 1893 from an IBEAC bankrupted by Lugard's military adventures. Driven entirely by political and

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attack, see also Emin, *Tagebücher 4*, p. 143 (25 July 1888). This was originally planned for January sending both steamers to make a show of force against Rukaara in the lowlanders Emin, *Tagebücher 3*, pp. 450-451 (7 Jan 1888). For this early 1888 plan, see also Casati, *Ten*, pp. 328-329

military expedience, the new Acting Commissioner of Uganda, Henry Colvile, did not change tack. He saw Bunyoro as an intractable threat to British ambitions in the region, and the means by which to alleviate increasing politico-religious tensions between factions within Buganda, where Britain had declared a protectorate. Colvile launched an expedition – comprising of more than 14,000 Ganda soldiers – against Kabaleega in late 1893, and by early January 1894 the imperial forces had overrun the Nyoro capital Mparo in Bugahya and seized the lucrative Kibiro salt mine on the lakeshore. Colvile had annexed the *masaza* in the historical plateau Nyoro heartlands south of the River Kafu to Buganda. For the purpose of crushing the resistance of Kabaleega, who had been forced to take refuge in Budongo Forest, Colvile resolved to cut Bunyoro in half by constructing a chain of fortified posts from Kibiro on the lake to Buruli on River Kafu.

The riparian borderlands became part of the battleground between the British imperial army to the south, seeking to incorporate Bugungu within a now-conquered and colonised Bunyoro, and the guerrilla forces of Kabaleega's exiled Nyoro court, forced from Bunyoro's central plateau. Bugungu's divided and ambiguous political loyalties were clear from the outset. The Bugungu lowlands momentarily became the key locus of conflict in this warzone. Fearing Kabaleega would source food in Bugungu, Colvile on 20 January attempted to extend British control north from Kibiro. He dispatched the 'Magungo Column' under Brevet Major Rodric Owen and Captain Thruston with a land force comprising of over 220 Sudanese and Swahili soldiers, 60 Lendu porters and 10 'Wanyoro' to 'make a demonstration' that would drive Kabaleega out of Bugungu. The advance along the lakeshore track forced Kabaleega to flee south-east into Budongo Forest.[242] But

[242] Colvile to Cracknall, 5 February 1894, PP C.7708.

in time-honoured fashion, many of Bugungu's inhabitants opted to take refuge across the water. British seizures of supplies and livestock perpetuated this displacement. Some forces loyal to Kabaleega were still active in Bugungu. About a thousand men under chief 'Makika' reportedly attacked the column as it neared the Victoria Nile on 23 January; but to the east the 'large force' who attacked their camp near Fort Magungu on the Victoria Nile on 26 January was operating under another chief who, according to prisoners captured during the skirmish, had come 'one day's march' – most likely from the south-eastern parts of Bugungu.[243] On the south-western littoral margins of Bugungu, people under the chief 'Karamoyo' hid themselves and their cattle from the British on islands offshore. [244]

Figure 8: 'Movements in Unyoro 1893-94'.

[243] Appendix G: Owen diary, 26 January 1894, PP C.7708; Colvile to Cracknall, 5 February 1894, PP C.7708; Int. Gungu 6a.
[244] Owen to Colvile. 31 January 1894, PP C.7708; Appendix G: Owen diary, 29 January 1894, PP C.7708.

Underestimating the logistical challenges, Colvile envisaged the resurrection of the abandoned Fort Magungu. From there the column was under orders to travel – ferried and accompanied by a steel boat bearing a maxim gun and piloted by another British soldier Purkiss – to the Albert Nile, in order to reconnoitre for signs of an expedition dispatched by the Congo Free State. The column was under instructions to proceed to Wadelai to locate and recruit any remnants of Emin's former Turco-Egyptian forces – lest they ally with the Mahdists further north – before garrisoning them at Fort Magungo. But these ambitions were not to be realised. After the attack on the 26 January, Owen had moved the column to take up a very brief residence in the fort, where he estimated a garrison of 50-100 men could be supported.[245] However, the column could not cross the river to advance north to recruit any of Emin's former troops; Purkiss' steel boat had not found a way through the sudd in the delta in order to ferry them across the Victoria Nile. The column waited a couple of days at Fort Magungo before aborting its mission.[246]

For a time, the British maintained their aspirations to reoccupy Bugungu.[247] But anxieties about encroachment of European imperial rivals into the north-western borderlands of Bunyoro were soon assuaged. A series of treaties were signed with chiefs, and garrisons established, on the Albert Nile and the western shore of the lake in February to May 1894. Fort Magungu would only very temporarily feature in the story of the British conquest of Bunyoro. The officer in charge of Bunyoro,

[245] Appendix G: Owen diary, 25 January 1894, PP C.7708.
[246] Purkiss to Colvile, 1 February 1894, PP C.7708. In the hope that the column had made it across the Victoria Nile by other means, Purkiss left the lake for the Albert Nile, but made it only part way towards Wadelai before experienced 'Lur' hostility returned to the lake and Kibiro.
[247] Owen to Covile, 11 February 1894, PP, C.7708

Arthur B. Thruston, waited there for about a week in about April 1894 en route to Hoima from the north-west shore of the lake Mahagi, where he had found and recruited 10,000 of Emin's abandoned Sudanese, who needed to be ferried from the north to the south bank of the Victoria Nile. But Thruston came away hardly convinced of the fort's merits – it was nothing 'except a ditch', he reported. Bed-bound with malaria at the time, Thruston considered Bugungu 'very unhealthy'.[248]

Bugungu remained beyond effective British influence, but became increasingly marginal to the emerging arenas of conflict. Already by April 1894, Kabaleega had moved far to the east and north-east at Buruli. He was forced towards the end of the year to begin guerilla warfare, as his supporters failed to hold onto or regain parts of central Bunyoro.[249] Only the people of Butyabwa closest to the escarpment to the south-west had submitted to the British in by mid-1894. They were raided from the direction of Bugungu a month later.[250] Kabaleega was reportedly keeping his cattle in Bugungu in August 1894, according to intelligence received by the British;[251] but the action had moved elsewhere.

At the same time, certain people from Bugungu were helping the British in their pursuit of Kabaleega outside the lowlands. The exiled old rebel Wamara of Bugungu, and many of his followers, including his consiglieri the 'shrewd old man' Kiiza, 'joined the English cause from the outset'. These men made sure they were known to the British as erstwhile allies of Emin, and steadfast enemies and oppressed victims of the old order. The British reported that Wamara had been

[248] Thruston, *African Incidents*, pp. 145, 174-187.
[249] UFFD, 9 June 1894, PP C.7708.
[250] UFFD, 12 June & 25 July 1894, PP C.7708.
[251] UFFD, 8 August 1894, PP C.7708.

exiled under Kamurasi and was still 'bitterly hated' by Kabaleega, who had killed Kiiza's father.[252] A mutually beneficial relationship developed between the British and Wamara – 'the most influential and powerful chief in [B]Unyoro'. Wamara had provided contingents of irregulars of as much as 100 men for key battles, like the daring November 1894 assault on Machudi in north-east which had nearly resulted in Kabaleega's capture.[253] Wamara and his deputies came to act as intermediaries, providing advice on the human and physical terrain, as they had done for Emin.[254] For such deeds, they were rewarded in the form of loot from expeditions and, more unusually, monthly payment for their services.[255] But it was clear that Wamara eyed the chieftainship of Bugungu above all else. Without elaborating, Thruston informed the commissioner in late 1894 that Wamara, 'by right of birth should be Chief of Magungo'.[256] Wamara and Kiiza – in acknowledgement of their having 'rendered great services' – were in line for the leadership of Bugungu, but would not dare to return there until Kabaleega was defeated once and for all.[257]

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[252] Ansorge, *Under,* pp. 169-171, 196; Thruston, *African Incidents*, p. 157; Colvile to Cracknall, 20 March 1894, PP C.7708; Vandeleur, *Campaigning*, p. 28.
[253] Henry Colvile, *The land of the Nile springs: being chiefly an account of how we fought Kabarega* (London, 1895), p. 270; Colvile to Hardinge, 6 December 1894 and Thruston to Colvile, 21 November 1894, PP C.7708.
[254] Thruston, *African Incidents*, p. 189, 198, 206, 232; Colvile, *The land*, p. 312, 319, 328-329. For references to Kiiza's assistance, see Vandeleur, *Campaigning*, p. 28; Trevor Ternan, *Some Experiences of an Old Bromsgrovian* (Birmingham, 1930), p. 201
[255] Thruston to OC Troops Uganda Protectorate, 23 September 1894, UNA, A2/3; Pulteney to Commissioner, 12 August 1896, UNA, A4/5; Price to Commissioner, 22 November 1898, UNA, A4/14. These payments were to continue for years – long after its original rationale had been forgotten.
[256] Thruston to Colvile, 21 November 1894, PP. C.7708.
[257] Pulteney to Commissioner, 23 September 1896, UNA, A4/6.

Bugungu was clearly seen by Kabaleega as a British vulnerability. [258] In Wamara's place, in mid-1896, a new collaborator called Rwabudongo had been put in charge of Bugungu.[259] But he was also given Kibero and Bugoma *masaza*, and Rwabudongo only nominally controlled Bugungu, where he had placed his son. At any rate, Wamara, among others, accused Rwabudongo – formerly one of the principal *barusura* leaders – of still aiding Kabaleega. Faced with formidable British strength in the east around Buruli, Kabaleega's men seem to have been extending their operations further and further west. In April 1896, the commander in Bunyoro William Pulteney requested that the forts be moved up the Nile to Bugungu to stop Kabaleega's men raiding across the water.[260] But the situation continued into September. Officials observed that peoples close to the river in northern Bunyoro were placed in the 'unpleasant predicament', of facing reprisals from both Kabaleega and the British for helping the other.[261] As the British plans to establish a more permanent physical presence had come to light, Kabaleega had ordered the destruction of all the crops in northern Bunyoro, forcing people to come to his side of the Nile.[262]

[258] Pulteney to Commissioner, 21 July 1896, UNA, A4/5; Pulteney to Commissioner, 30 August 1896, UNA, A4/5; Ternan to Commissioner, 1 November 1896, UNA, A4/6; Pulteney to Commissioner,1 February 1897, UNA, A4/7.
[259] Pulteney to Commissioner, 25 June 1896, UNA, A4/5.
[260] Pulteney to Commissioner, 18 April 1896, UNA, A4/5.
[261] Berkeley to S. of S., 15 September 1896, UKNA, CO 83/1794
[262] Ternan to Berkeley, 11 October 1896, UNA, A4/6.

Figure 9: 'Loading up the ferry-boat at Pajao'.[263]

The British tried to secure Bugungu in the last few months of 1896, extending the military frontier northward from the Kibiro-Mruli line to the Victoria Nile, a few months after the British government declared that the Uganda Protectorate had been extended to include districts to the west of Buganda, and also Bunyoro to the north-west. In early October 1896 Ternan initiated the construction of a fort at Pawir in the north-east of Bunyoro and established Ruyonga's successor, Rejumba, as chief between there and Buruli to the east. Ternan proceeded westward the next month and selected Mugema for the *saza* from Pawiir to Pajao. He selected Pajao as site for a fort in order to monitor the ferry crossing, and from which the entire Bugungu riverbank upriver could be patrolled.[264] From Pajao, the British were able to react with great speed when word reached them that

[263] Kitching, *Backwaters*, p. 49.
[264] Ternan, *Some experiences*, p. 262.

Kabaleega's men were in Bugungu preparing to attack forts to the south. An expedition to Bugungu in November killed many of the Mukama's men, and captured forty more including a chief called 'Kabega', along with two of the Mukama's daughters, and two very large dugout canoes.[265]

With local fear of Kabaleega's reprisals beginning to subside, people started to return to Bugungu and submit to the British.[266] By February 1897 the British had even convinced the 'real chief', Wamara, to accept the chiefship of Bugungu, and to return there with his followers.[267] Wamara's change of heart was probably in part because Kabaleega's end seemed to be in sight; but perhaps he also sensed that further political advancement beckoned. The matter of the system of administration remained unresolved. At first it seemed that the British would place one of Kabaleega's sons on the throne under one or more regents, in preference to incorporating Bunyoro into Buganda.[268] But another radically different form of administration was being considered for a time in late 1896 into 1897 by the British officer in charge of Bunyoro. Ternan advanced his opinion that it was preferable for Bunyoro to be governed as several separate political units through the 'local chiefs' that he had just appointed. [269] Certain chiefs – and others waiting in the wings like Wamara – were no doubt keen to capitalise, should this proposal gain traction.[270]

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[265] Ternan to Berkeley, 27 November, 1896, UKNA, CO 83/1794.
[266] Ternan to Berkeley, 27 November 1896, UNA, A4/6.
[267] Ternan to Berkeley, 1 November 1896, UNA, A4/6; Pulteney to Berkeley, 1 February 1897, UNA, A4/7.
[268] Maddocks to unknown, 30 August 1895, UNA, A4/2; Ternan to Berkeley, 26 September 1896, UNA, A4/6.
[269] Ternan to Berkeley, 27 November 1896, UNA, A4/6; Berkeley to Marquis of Salisbury, 27 Nov 1896, UKNA, CO 83/1794.
[270] Ternan to Berkeley, 27 November 1896, UNA, A4/6.

But Wamara died just a few months later, at the end of May 1897. At around the same time so did these nascent, alternative political visions. Wamara's death – apparently by poisoning – also suggested to the population that the British could not protect them from the Mukama's terrifying, enduring reach. In vindication of Wamara's earlier concerns, under Kabaleega's orders he was poisoned by one of his own sub-chiefs. When the accused resisted arrest he was killed along with twenty of his followers by the British. But the effect of this show of force was not as salutary as the British hoped. Many local people – indeed the victim himself as the poison took hold – believed this to be death by *mahano* or Kabaleega's 'witchcraft'. Soon after Wamara's death, Thruston composed a lengthy memorandum arguing for the restoration of Kabaleega's lineage on the Nyoro throne. The 'respect of the people is for royal blood', he opined; 'they do not trouble themselves with questions of legitimacy'.[271] In March 1898, when false rumours of Kabaleega's death spread through Bunyoro, it was decided to proclaim as Mukama one of his sons in order to maintain 'good government and good-will'.[272]

Bugungu was the place from which the earliest collaborators with the British were drawn, but also where the residual threat of Kabaleega was felt for longest. The lowlands became 'very disorganised' in the months following Wamara's death at the end of May 1897, Thruston had reported; in accordance with the 'national custom', he appointed Wamara's nephew 'Msoga', as regent during the minority of Wamara's eldest son, the 'small boy' Ajaka (see figure).[273] But Msoga was himself 'only a lad', and one so unsettled by the threat posed by Kabaleega that he sought refuge in 'drink and debauchery'. The British recalled him to Masindi for

[271] Thruston to Commissioner, 29 June 1897, UNA, A4/8.
[272] Wilson, 'Proclamation', 8 March 1898, UNA, A5/4.
[273] Thruston to unknown, 10 June 1897, UNA, A4/8.

supervision, leaving Wamara's old deputy, Kiiza to oversee Bugungu from his base at Padiri in the north-east.[274] Kiiza maintained the Bugungu chiefship by upholding the Wamara faction's historical reputation with the military administration for being Kabaleega's most committed adversaries.[275]

Figure 10: 'The infant Ajaka, the youngest chief in Unyoro'.[276]

But even the wily political veteran Kiiza found it difficult to dispel the threat of Kabaleega. From late 1897 to May 1899, Bugungu faced frequent raids. After crossing to the south bank, *barusura* leader Ireta and his followers had started targeting southern and south-eastern Bugungu. In April 1898, once Kabaleega had

[274] Cunningham to Commissioner, 2 December 1897, UNA, A4/9; Ansorge, *Under*, pp. 169-171; Bagge to Commissioner, 16 May 1902 UNA, A12/2.
[275] Cunningham to Commissioner, 6 December 1897, UNA, A4/9; Evatt to Acting Commissioner, 21 May 1899, UNA, A4/17.
[276] Ansorge, *Under*. N.B. Ajaka is standing on a stool.

joined hands with the uprising by Sudanese mutineers and Mwanga's Ganda Muslims, the British sent three columns north to hunt down Ireta's guerrillas.[277] But he evaded capture in the forests of Budongo and Pabidi. Ireta's influence in Bugungu was still 'far-reaching' even in March 1899. The officer in charge of Bunyoro noted that the inhabitants of Bugungu were said to be 'all in Ireta's service' owing to fear of having women captured and ransomed for food; the British commander even proposed establishing a post in Kitoro near the escarpment east of Butyabwa in the hope Ireta could be caught while out in the open.[278] The insecurity forced people to rely even more heavily on fish, and to hide their cultivation precariously on the floating papyrus islands.[279] Only in May 1899 did Ireta surrender, just over a month after Kabaleega's defeat and capture.

Conclusion

For a quarter of a century Bugungu found itself at the frontline of competing, interacting, and multiplying political projects led by royal pretenders, local entrepreneurs, Kabaleega, and foreign imperial powers. Lowlanders navigated the demands and opportunities as best they could. Some in Bugungu had rallied behind Kabaleega, but throughout this period there were notable exceptions which rendered salient old ethnocivilisational stereotypes, reinforcing the distrust and disdain that had long defined the relationship between Bugungu and centralised state authority. The unprecedented intrusion and imposition of overlapping regimes of authority was marked by extreme violence and coercion –

[277] Price to Martyr, 25 July 1898, UKNA, FO 2/15. For a detailed account of this episode using the (now lost) papers of one of the British officers, see E. C. Lanning, 'Kikukule: guardian of southeastern Bunyoro', *UJ* 32, no. 2 (1968), pp. 119-147 (pp. 138-141).
[278] OCD Unyoro to Commissioner, 17 March 1899, UNA, A4/16.
[279] J. Williams Quoted in Johnston to S. of S., 18 April 1900, UKNA, FO 2/298.

often in the form of collective punishment. These legacies were to powerfully shape the contours of the imperial administration, and patterns of local response, that developed in Bugungu in the early twentieth century, shaping Anglo-Nyoro stereotypes of Gungu, and thereby structuring emerging conceptions of ethno-civilisational hierarchy.

CHAPTER THREE: *Savage punishment: disease, difference, and displacement, c. 1899-c.1921*

The historiography of early colonial Bunyoro has been preoccupied by a political expression of Nyoro ethnicity: the Nyangire protest movement led in 1907 by local chiefs on the plateau in reaction to Ganda political and cultural sub-imperialism.[280] But different challenges confronted the British and the Nyoro elite in Bugungu as they sought to transform this politically interstitial space of alterity in-between political systems to one unambiguously within the shrunken husk of colonial Bunyoro. In this encounter, the colonial state absorbed and amplified certain older ethno-civilisational stereotypes, adopting a spatial strategy for economic, political, and disease control that entailed classificatory violence – a monumental act of collectivising punishment that was at once differential and differentiating..[281]

Proper and improper tribes

The British soldier-administrators who introduced military rule in Bunyoro at the close of the nineteenth century did not concern themselves to any meaningful extent with the composition of what remained of Bunyoro. During the war the British tended to categorise the people of the country simply as either 'friendly

[280] See for example, Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 96-112; and Emma Wild-Wood, 'Bible translation and the formation of corporate identity in Uganda and Congo 1900-40', *JAH* 58, no. 3 (2017), pp. 489-507.
[281] The most detailed accounts of the sleeping sickness epidemic in Bunyoro have hitherto focused almost exclusively on the north-eastern Cope counties . For examples, see Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 146-150; Harvey G. Soff, 'A history of sleeping sickness in Uganda: administrative response 1900-1970', unpublished PhD dissertation (Syracuse University, 1971), pp. 161-173.

Wanyoro' or (unfriendly) 'Wanyoro'; now they were just 'Wanyoro'. Those on the plateau at the centre of the colonial district did not dispute this assessment. A colonial medic based at the fort at Pajao noted a 'different race' who 'call themselves "Falua," [Palwo] and differ from the Wanyoro in every respect'.[282] But he did not venture any further away from Pajao into Bugungu, it seems. No Europeans spent more than a day or two in the area. Bugungu was part of a littoral zone that was considered by Europeans to represent a 'black strip in the health map of Uganda'.[283] Certain parts of Bugungu, including its north-eastern limits at Pajao, were deemed particularly 'poisonous' and 'wretched'.[284] The fort, far from any settled area, was soon abandoned.

These men felt little need to uncover political structures and socio-cultural affinities as justification for their delineation of Bunyoro as an administrative unit. The northern fringes, once sites of intense military interest, were increasingly relegated to obscurity in the official mind. In Bugungu the hardship endured as the rains failed in 1899, leading to famine. In that December the first missionary to visit the plains for two decades noted that the famine had forced the withdrawal of the Church Missionary Society's African teachers from Pajao, and was driving Bugungu's inhabitants to migrate south along the shoreline.[285]

But over the first few years of the 1900s, the civilian administration that took

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[282] Ansorge, *Under*, pp. 189-190.
[283] Moffat, 'Principal Medical Officer's Report for the Year ending December 31, 1900', UKNA, FO 2/462.
[284] A. St H. Gibbons, *Africa from south to north through Marotseland, Vol.II* (London, 1904), pp. 184-185. See also Lionel Decle to Eric Barrington, 16 Jan 1901, UKNA, FO 2/512; C. Steuart Betton, 'The Murchison Falls', *Nature* 66, no. 1703 (1902), pp. 188-189; Clement Arthur Sykes, *Service and Sport on the Tropical Nile* (London, 1903), p. 101.
[285] A.B. Fisher's notes, CRL, G3/A7/O/1900/140.

charge began to devote slightly more attention to the anatomy of a newly 'pacified' district. On the basis of information provided by influential African informants, certain missionaries and administrators began to move beyond the taken-for-granted, simple notion of a Nyoro 'race' or 'tribe'. Instead, they saw a Bunyoro comprising of 'several distinct tribes' 'belonging to different parts', 'differing completely from each other', and only 'nominally united under one king'.[286] As part of a broader process of ethno-territorial ordering and mapping that extended throughout and beyond the Protectorate, early administrators came to understand Bunyoro's several administrative sub-divisions as corresponding with what they termed 'tribal territories'.[287]

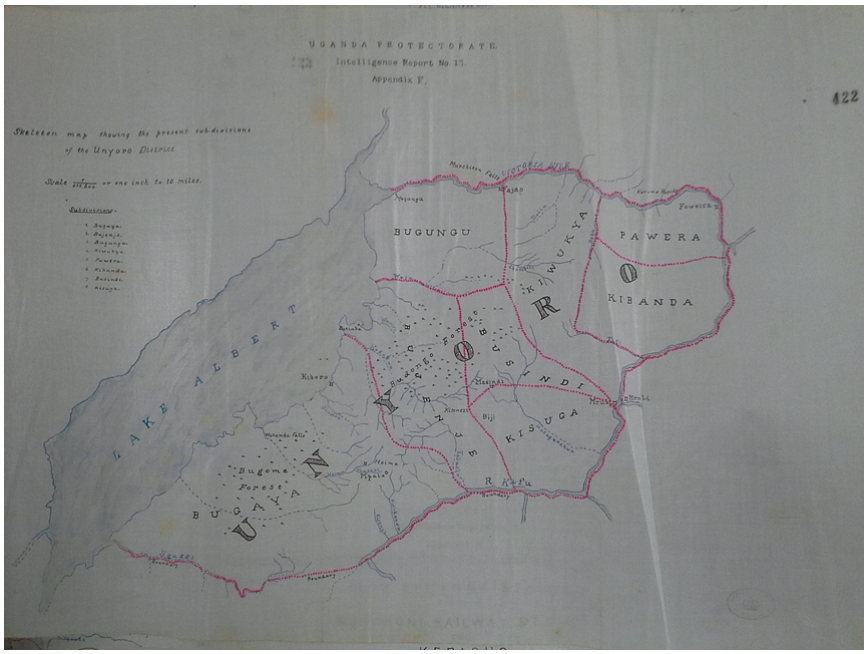

Figure 11: 'Skeleton map showing the present sub-divisions of the Unyoro District' (1901).[288]

[286] Wilson to commissioner, 10 March 1904, UNA, A12/5; Roscoe, *Bakitara*, p. 199. For an account of Bunyoro's 'tribes' by a Ganda pastor who spent more than fifteen years there, see Nuwa K. Nakiwafu, 'Hoima, Bunyoro', *Ebifa mu Buganda*, 58 (1911), pp. 1-3.
[287] Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, pp. 591-592.
[288] 'Appendix E: Notes on the Kingdom of Unyoro', in Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report no. 17, April 1901, UKNA, FO 2/72

Establishing colonial administration did not only involve mapping horizontal relations of difference. Under the influence of late Victorian social theories of evolutionary historicism and 'racial science' grafted onto ethno- and state-centric local ideas, early colonial officials exhibited a powerful interest in putative hierarchies of civilisation between the 'tribes' they thought comprised the colonised population. In the view of Johnston, the 'big black Bantu Negro race', for example, had been 'tempered in varying degrees of intermixture' with the superior 'Hamitic negroid races from the northern half of Africa'; some tribes were, therefore, more 'degraded' – and disposable – than others in terms of temporal measures of linguistic, physical, social, and political development.[289] As such certain groups were more 'proper' than others, particularly in regard to attitudes towards centralised authority.

Some maintained that one could be less or more Nyoro. Such notions found expression in regard to some of the people of the plateau in the European use of phrases such as 'pure Banyoro', 'Banyoro proper', or, as one Masindi-based missionary put it, 'pukka Banyoro' as opposed to 'buffer tribes'.[290] Muddled, partly tautological statements about 'tribes' and ethnonyms emerged when Europeans tried to impose a static, neat taxonomy: 'the Banyoro are divided into clans or tribes', including the 'the Banyoro in Bugahya and Busindi, Baroori in Kisuga [Buruli]', 'Bagungu in Bugungu' and 'Bachopi [or Jo-Palwo] in Pawera, Kibanda

[289] Harry H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* (London, 1902), pp. 566-567, 591-592.
[290] A.B. Fisher, 'Itineration Round Lake Albert', *Uganda Notes* 11, no. 11 (1911), pp. 171-172; Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* (London, 1902), pp. 566-567, 591-592; even the people of Busindi were not always placed within this category. For examples of 'Sindi' as a discrete category, see Diary entry for September 1916, A.G.M.Afr., D.OR.168, 'Diaire de n.d. du sacre Coeur, Masindi'; 'Au mois de Janvier', *Rapport Annuel*, 1911-1912, no. 7 (1912); see A. L. Kitching, *On the backwaters of the Nile* (London, 1912), pp. 6, 14 & 18. Kitching asserted that 'the Basindi are somewhat superior to the Banyoro in physique and capacity for work'.

and Kiwukya'. For Europeans, part of the confusion lay in the fact that some of the chiefly lineages even on the periphery were culturally Nyoro-ised, and it also seemed that although these 'distinct tribes' were 'too diverse in character to effectively unite in any cause', there were no 'inter-tribal feuds' between them.' [291]

The categories that generated the most official interest were those applying to the people of northern Bunyoro. Those widely known as Gungu were deemed *different* to the people of the tablelands, but in a manner less easily grasped than that which separated the latter from the Lwo-speaking Palwo of the north-east. The first official to take charge of Bunyoro as District Collector, George Wilson, was immediately struck in Bugungu by the 'essentially tropical' nature of the vegetation, similar to 'the country on the mainland opposite Mombasa'.[292] The population were as different as the environment, he came to learn. Chiefs from central Bunyoro told Wilson 'the Bagungu' were 'entirely alien' and their language 'akin to that of no other tribe known in their vicinity'.[293] Early African missionary visitors noted that the people of Bugungu found Runyoro 'difficult'.[294] Administrators who followed in Wilson's footsteps confirmed that this was a 'peculiar', 'somewhat distinct' 'tribe' in that it 'differs in many particulars from the tribes surrounding it' to the degree that it 'well merits examination by an anthropologist'.[295]

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[291] Wilson to commissioner, 10 March 1904, UNA, A12/5; 'Appendix E: Notes on the Kingdom of Unyoro', in Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report no. 17, October 1902, UKNA, FO 2/804.
[292] Deputy Commissioner to Commissioner, 18 May 1904, UNA, A12/5.
[293] Wilson to Commissioner, 18 May 1904, UNA, A12/5.
[294] Nuwa Nakiwafu, letter dated 4 April 1902, quoted in Anon., 'Uganda', *CMI* 53, no. 10 (1902), pp. 773-776 (p. 776).
[295] C. Delmé-Radcliffe, 'Surveys and Studies in Uganda', *The Geographical Journal* 26, no. 5 (1905), pp. 481-497 (p. 488).

Two different ways of seeing their difference were to emerge. For some the Gungu were a remnant. Before leaving Uganda in 1902, Special Commissioner Harry Johnston had noted, in the huge ethnological compendium he published that same year, that the language spoken in Bugungu 'differ[ed] widely from the Nyoro tongue'.[296] He speculated on its relationship with other languages: 'probably it is a dialect of' or 'closely allied' to 'Luhuku' – a 'very ancient' and unusual tongue spoken west of the Semliki River near the southern extremity of Lake Albert.[297] Others saw this population as a hybrid, with the source of contamination lying to the north along the western shore: they had 'assimilated themselves with the Lendus', with whom they remained in 'close communication'.[298]

Either of these theories concerning Bugungu's alterity could be invoked in order to make sense of the area's socio-political relationship with Bunyoro. Officials reported that there was possibly a historically fraught, estranged relationship with the Nyoro state. Perhaps trying to ingratiate the area with the new regime, local informants in Bugungu told officials that they were victims of the 'great animosity' of Kabaleega, who blamed them 'for Baker's and Casati's entrance into

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[296] Long after leaving Uganda, Johnston continued to gather data in this regard. At his request, a list of 'Rugungu' words was compiled in 1907 by his former private secretary, Major Jean-François Cunningham, before being revised and augmented in 1912 by an anonymous 'educated' Ganda man. Consciously adhering to Mehmet Emin's conception that Runyoro was spoken by the entire population of western Uganda, right down to Tanganyika, Johnston identified 'Rugungu' as the 'northernmost dialect of the Nyoro sub-group', if taxonomically separated, like Rukobia (spoken on the narrow shoreline further south), from Runyoro proper. See Harry H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, pp. 567, 592, 946. pp.591 (f.2), 838; 'Word lists', SOAS, MS 193299, Johnston Collection, Box 1; Harry Hamilton Johnston, *A comparative study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu languages* (Oxford, 1919), pp. 45-56, 785-786.

[297] Harry H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, pp. 479-481, 567, 592, 946. pp.591 (f.2), 838;

[298] Bagge (Collector Unyoro District) to H.M. Commissioner and Consul General, 16 May 1902, UNA, A12/2.

[B]Unyoro'.[299] There were further clues in a magical migration tradition involving 'the waters [of Lake Albert] opening and leaving a passage'. Revealing a particular attitude to those above the the escarpment and a particular sense of geography, the story explained that '[t]he bulk of their tribe' had in this way 'escaped oppression in [B]Unyoro'.[300]

But what were once ethnological curiosities or encouraging signs in the official mind, were soon rendered worrying indications of a tendency towards defiance. The salience of the Gungu category in Anglo-Nyoro discourse reflected growing practical concerns. Problems had started to become clear after Collector Wilson had replaced the Bugungu saza chief, Kiiza, in 1901 while reorganising the administration along the lines of the Buganda system. In dropping Kiiza, the colonial administration signalled that they no longer deemed enduring animus towards Kabaleega to be sufficient qualification for chieftainship; appointments were heavily influenced by CMS opinion. Kiiza suffered demotion. In his place, the British appointed Sirasi Tibansamba, a Busoga-born Anglican who had been brought to Bunyoro 'as a child' and raised in the Nyoro court. Tibansamba and his Ganda deputy very soon faced considerable opposition in Bugungu. Wilson's replacement as District Collector reported 'the Bagungu' to be a 'somewhat different', or 'somewhat distinct' people who were 'difficult to manage and disinclined to listen to or obey their Chief'.[301]

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[299] G. Wilson, 'Appendix B: Report on the legends, history, and people of UNYORO', in Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report no. 12, April 1902, UKNA, FO 2/804; Johnston, *Uganda*, p. 592.
[300] C. Delmé-Radcliffe, 'Surveys and Studies in Uganda', *The Geographical Journal* 26, no. 5 (1905), pp. 481-497 (p. 488).
[301] Bagge to Commissioner, 16 May 1902 UNA, A12/2; Bagge to Commissioner, 29 April 1902, UNA, A12/2; P.M.K Lwanga, *Obulamu bw'Omutaka: J.K. Miti Kabazzi*

Ethnic categories informed official understandings of these administrative difficulties. 'With their own chief Kiiza there was little or no trouble', British official Stephen Bagge reported hearing from a senior chief in Hoima. Problems started 'only since a stranger has been put over them'. Tibansamba was not a 'stranger' for having been born in Busoga rather than Bunyoro, believed Bagge; rather, he was a stranger for not being 'a native of Magungu'. A young local rival called Mwanga, a sub-chief born of Bugungu, was waiting in the wings. Like that of late Wamara, Mwanga's lineage claimed to be rulers of Bugungu 'by hereditary right'. The Collector Bagge reported that Mwanga was the son of the 'the former chief of Bugungu by descent'.[302] Calls for Tibansamba's removal were in reality not merely a response to his outsider status. Tibansamba and one of his sub-chiefs had displeased the Anglo-Nyoro establishment above the escarpment by converting to Catholicism in 1902.[303] The Anglican missionaries' star pupil, Andereya Bisereko Duhaga, installed as mukama the same year, supported the claim of the baptised Anglican Erenesti Mwanga, whose family had received missionaries as far back as 1899.[304] Tibansamba's local unpopularity also stemmed partly from abuse of office; complaints regarding his seizure of peoples' property led to an inquiry in May-June 1903 by Collector Stanley Tomkins. Tibansamba and his deputy were found guilty of embezzlement and deposed.[305]

(Kampala, 1954), p. 74, 90; 'Appendix E: Notes on the Kingdom of Unyoro', in Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report no. 17, October 1902, UKNA, FO 2/804.
[302] Edward Steinhart interview with Marko Rwanga, 28 October 1968, CRLs, EISP/B/16; Bagge to Commissioner, 16 May 1902, UNA, A12/2.
[303] Omer Beaudoin, 'History of Hoima Parish: foundation', Rubaga Diocesan Archive, MS.276.3.
[304] A.B. Fisher, notes, CMS, G3/A7/O/1900/140.
[305] Tomkins to Commissioner, 30 June 1903, UNA, A12/3.

But local hostility towards these chiefs was a response to *authorised* exactions, not to embezzlement. Previously the British had struggled to convince chiefs to even attempt to implement any government directives in areas such as Bugungu. Senior chiefs in Masindi contemptuously explained that such efforts were futile as the people of the 'outlying country' were '"such *washenzi*" (a Swahili term with meaning akin to 'barbarians'). The barbarians demonstrated 'slackness in obedience to orders'.[306] Wilson had replaced many chiefs, including Kiiza, in order to remedy this situation. But many people in Bugungu were unprepared to accept these burdens introduced by the alien regime, regardless of the origins of the chiefs who mediated them. Tibansamba and some of his sub-chiefs – both from Bugungu and those from elsewhere – explained that the accusations levelled against him were merely a mask to distract the administration from the fact that people were 'emigrating to avoid hut tax'.[307]

The tenuous nature of sovereignty on the plains meant that the inhabitants could play off different regulatory regimes. Bugungu shared highly porous lacustrine and riparian boundaries to the west and north-west respectively with the Belgian Congo and Lado Enclave, a barely administered area on the west bank of the Albert Nile which was part of King Leopold's Congo Free State; to the north, over the intra-territorial boundary on the Victoria Nile, lay the lightly administered Koba District within the Uganda Protectorate's Nile Province. When '100 Alurs' had arrived in Bugungu around the turn of 1901, as part of a 'considerable' wider influx, the British were apt to frame such movement in terms of the moral geography of imperial rule: the group were reported to have moved 'on account of

[306] Wilson to Johnston, 6 September 1900, UNA, A12/1.
[307] Tomkins to Commissioner, 30 June 1903, UNA, A12/3; Wilson to Johnston, 18 May 1904, UNA, A12/5.

bad treatment' in Belgian territory.[308] But when traffic flowed the other way, concerns about 'tribal territories' were invoked amid alarm over taxes and labour.[309] The British were increasingly also worried about movements within the protectorate to the Nile Province. In one case, a sub-chief and about 300 of his followers had opted out of Bugungu this way.[310] Inhabitants of the littoral zone, like border people everywhere, both flouted and appropriated the sovereign logics of sedentarism, map-making and borders.[311]

These early colonial movements, like those of the pre-colonial era, depended on, and were determined by, political and social ties which were temporally deep and transcended ethnic boundaries.[312] Across the border at the foot of the escarpment at Mahagi, the chief Otwikende, was referred to by the Belgians as 'sultan of the Bagongo'. Though his subjects were largely Alur, his father was a Bantu-speaker from across the lake.[313] Alur settlements, with roots of varying historical depths, were common throughout the northern half of Bunyoro, and had only become more common around the advent of colonial rule. [314]

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[308] R.C.R. Owen, 'Precis of a Road Report from KIBERO to BURIGI and MASINDI', Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report No.1, Appendix D., 18 March 1901, UKNA, FO 2/804.
[309] Wilson to Johnston, 10 December 1900, UNA, A12/1.
[310] Tomkins to Commissioner, 30 June 1903, UNA, A12/3.
[311] For example, see P. Nugent, *Smugglers, Secessionists and Loyal Citizens on the Ghana-Togo Frontier: The Life of the Borderlands since 1914* (Oxford, 2002).
[312] Kitching, *Backwaters*, p. 47.
[313] Edward S. Grogan, *From the Cape to Cairo* (London, 1900), pp. 30-31; J. Flamme, *Notes de voyage dans la Belgique africaine* (Bruxelles, 1908), pp. 226, 312.
[314] OCD Unyoro to Commissioner, 24 February 1899, UNA, A4/16.

Figure 12: Map showing the boundaries of Uganda, the Congo Free State and the Lado Enclave.[315]

Figure 13: David Bruce, 'Koba, Lake Albert' (1903).[316]

[315] J. Flamme, *Notes de voyage dans la Belgique africaine* (Bruxelles, 1908).
[316] From RAMC, 1242/6.

The situation did not improve under Tibansamba's replacement, the 'weak youth' Mwanga from Bugungu. In May 1904 a visit from the mukama Duhaga and Wilson - now Sub-Commissioner of Western Province - occasioned a public meeting which 'the Bagungu' attended 'in large numbers'. Wilson delivered news that he was introducing measures to regulate labour demanded by chiefs – news that had 'created such enthusiasm' at such meetings elsewhere in Bunyoro. But this announcement had a 'much more moderate effect' in Bugungu. The 'embarrassing want of feeling', Wilson discovered, stemmed from 'the fact that they had not hitherto regarded with much respect exactions of labour made by the chiefs'. 'The Bagungu have a reputation for insolent disregard of any authority', Wilson explained to the Commissioner.[317] Six months later, it was apparent that disregard could turn to open defiance. It was noted in October 1904 by the Collector that 'non-tax-payers in this part of '[B]Unyoro exceed very considerably the number of payers'.[318] Sub-chiefs complained to a touring colonial administrator a couple of months later that on one occasion while attempting to collect taxes, in one village the inhabitants 'turned out armed with spears, bows and arrows and drove them off'.[319]

[317] Wilson to Commissioner, 18 May 1904, UNA, A12/5.
[318] T. Grant, 'Report on Hoima Station for Month of October, 1904', 7 November 1904, UNA, A12/5.
[319] T. Grant, 'Report on Hoima Station for Month of November, 1904', 5 December 1904, UNA, A12/5.

Figure 14: 'Map of Western Unyoro' (1901).[320]

Discipline and disease control

In the British imagination of Bugungu, ideas of environmental and demographic crisis intertwined with a sense of moral and political panic in these years.[321] It was African health that now rapidly came into view. The key concern for public health across Uganda in the first decade of colonial rule was sleeping sickness or Human trypanosomiasis (or '*mangoota*', as it was known locally), which had been first identified in the south of the protectorate in 1901. Carried by tsetse flies, the disease killed about 300,000 people on and around Lake Victoria in this period. The British had first become aware of suspected cases of sleeping sickness in

[320] From Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report No.1, Appendix D, 18 March 1901, UKNA, FO 2/804.
[321] Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 134-163; Hoppe, *Lords*); Heather Bell, *Frontiers of medicine in the Anglo-Eqyptian Sudan, 1899-1940* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 127-162.

Bugungu in about August 1904. Officials were alerted by the chief Mwanga that inhabitants of Bugungu were 'dying in large numbers from an unknown disease'.[322]

In November 1904, the assistant collector and medical officer toured Bugungu, and reported that sleeping sickness was prevalent in northern Bunyoro, warning that the disease may have spread as far north as Nimule near the border with Sudan.[323] At 'Mwanga's shamba' in the angle between the Weiga River and its tributary the Izolya, the medical officer collected 18 suspected cases who were inspected in Hoima.[324] On the basis of a subsequent tour in the December, E.D.W. Greig of the Royal Society's Sleeping Sickness Commission soon reported that the disease was present on the Victoria Nile, at Buligi and Pajao on the south-bank and Kimori on the north, and as far down the Albert Nile as Wadelai. Greig believed that 'the chief infection is South of the Victoria Nile'; the disease had not so far reached Nimule, but he cautioned that there was 'evidence that it is advancing Northwards in the fly belt'.[325] The news of the disease's presence on the Albert Nile in Uganda generated panic among certain senior officials. Wilson, now as Acting Commissioner, sent a telegram London warning of the 'grave' implications. Wilson was concerned not only about its possible impacts on British interests down the Nile, beyond Uganda, but also, and more immediately, the 'political' consequences in parts of the Uganda Protectorate that lacked the 'passivity or resignation of the Baganda'. Recent experiences in Bugungu made him

[322] T. Grant, 'Report on Hoima Station for Month of September, 1904', 10 October 1904, UNA, A12/5.
[323] Sadler to Foreign Office, 1 November 1904, UKNA, FO 2/861; and A. G. Speke, 'Report of Tour in the Chiopi [sic] District During November 1904', UNA, A12/5
[324] Greig to Wilson, 5 December 1904, UKNA, FO 2/860.
[325] Greig to Wilson, 26 December 1904, UKNA, FO 2/928.

particularly anxious that the disease might 'dislocate' the 'administrative machinery' in 'areas such as Unyoro and the Nile'.[326]

But the medical panic was largely misplaced. In December 1904, the medical officer in charge of extended sleeping sickness investigations, Aubrey Hodges, was dispatched to northern Bunyoro by the Principal Medical Officer. In a lengthy report written on the basis of several weeks' safari along and to the east of Masindi-Pajao cart road, Hodges confirmed the focal point of the outbreak in Bugungu, at Mwanga's headquarters along the Waiga river. He estimated that the number of deaths amounted to 'several hundreds'. But the investigation did not yield significant data as 'the natives, who have had little to do with Europeans', 'were found to be extremely shy and suspicious'.[327] But as the PMO pointed out, Wilson's 'melodramatic telegram' about the spectre of sleeping sickness in Bunyoro had, generated an 'unwonted amount of excitement'. 'There have been a few cases', he conceded, 'but so far as I can make out from the investigations (...) it is as yet not very extensive or serious'. The PMO stated with 'practical certainty', that elsewhere 'sleeping sickness was not present in epidemic form'.[328]

Further details confirmed that this outbreak did not warrant dramatic intervention. E.B. Adams, who toured Bugungu in September 1905, confirmed that the epidemic was localised in a group of about a dozen villages situated on and between these the Waija and Izolya rivers, with the location of Mwanga's headquarters, right in their midst. Infection was with *Trypanosoma gambiense*, and the vector, *Glossina palpalis*, was observed to be abundant. The mortality rate was

[326] Wilson to S. of S., 3 November 1904, UKNA, FO 2/860.
[327] A.D.P. Hodges, 'Report on Sleeping sickness in Unyoro and Nile valley', *RSSCRS*, no. 8 (1907), pp. 86-99.
[328] Will to Bruce, 1 February 1905, WTI, RST/G27/11.

severe with at least 200 deaths on the lower Waija river attributable to sleeping sickness over the previous few months.[329] But this death-rate paled into insignificance when compared to what had happened on Lake Victoria. No *G.palpalis* were found north-west of the lowlands in some of the areas most prone to tax evasion, along the seven miles of Victoria Nile flanking the delta into Lake Albert, or along the lakeshore as far as the river Weiga.[330]

The Sleeping Sickness panic had to a large extent passed by the turn of 1906. But political disorder and insubordination reigned. The collector on tour heard that the people of Bugungu were 'encouraged in their attitude' by the people across the river who called them 'slaves of the Wazungu' for bowing to the taxation demands of the whites. Among the main offenders were the inhabitants of the village of Buliisa where the people 'openly said that they were quite ready to migrate (...) if pressed'. The lowlands itself remained a place of refuge for some, such as those of sub-chief Okello's sizeable 'Aluru village' of Kakoora in eastern-central.[331] But the outflux continued. Refusing to pay taxes, 700 people had crossed the Victoria Nile to Koba District. The 'instigator of the movement' was their chief, who preferred to accept the less onerous demands of Koba's Lwo-speaking chief, Omach.[332]

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[329] E. B. Adams, 'Account of a Tour by Mr. Speke and Dr. Adams in Northern Unyoro and on the Victoria Nile, November 14, 1905', *RSSCRS*, no. 8 (1907), pp. 100-105.
[330] A.D.P. Hodges diary, 30 December 1905, RHL, Mss.Afr.s.1782.
[331] A.G Speke, 'Report on the agricultural prospects and political situation in the districts of Bugungu and Chiopi', 4 November 1905, UKNA, CO 536/3.
[332] F.H Leakey (Collector) to Commissioner, 25 January 1906, UNA, A42/57; Sub-Commissioner Nimuli (or Acting Collector?) to Commissioner, 5 October 1905, UNA, A42/57; Deputy Commissioner to Commissioner, 2 November 1905, UNA, A42/57.

Bugungu was source of frustration for early colonial officials because its inhabitants were 'very unwilling to pay' tax, despite being a 'wealthy people'.[333] Its population's recovery in this regard since about 1900 had been quite remarkable. Some elephant-ravaged neighbouring areas relied 'to a great extent' on supplies from the cultivable hinterland areas of eastern Bugungu, which was considered to be 'rich in food' and 'much better' in this regard than those immediately to the east and south. There was also a booming trade in fish sought by 'tribes across the river'.[334] Within the space of a few years, touring officials viewed Bugungu's population as denser and wealthier than in 'any other part of the district'.[335] Most people possessed flocks of goats and sheep. The inhabitants of the area were reported to be 'well-rounded in figure', and, compared with the 'rather ragged and scraggy' people of southern Bunyoro 'altogether wear a more contented and prosperous look'. 'The women', Wilson opined, 'can quite well be described as buxom'.[336]

The colonial state came to see Bugungu as wealthy, but both fiscally barren and ungovernable; its overmighty population of inveterate tax evaders appeared largely impervious to domestication. This area, that for Deputy Commissioner Wilson constituted '"undisciplined" [B]Unyoro', represented an intractable problem going into 1906.[337] Disciplinary measures were in order. Entebbe had

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[333] Speke to Deputy Commissioner, 4 November 1905, UKNA, CO 536/3.
[334] 'Summary of intelligence received from 1st April to 24th April 1901', Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report No. 1, UKNA, FO 2/72; E. Brown, 'Report on cultivations in Unyoro', 10 July 1907, UNA, A43/151; Speke, 'Report on the agricultural prospects and political situation in the districts of Bugungu and Chiopi', 4 November 1905, UKNA, CO 536/3.
[335] T. Grant, Bunyoro annual report, 1904-05, 6 May 1905, UNA, A6/17, quoted in Doyle, *Crisis*, p. 141. Archivists at the UNA could not locate this file in my presence.
[336] Wilson to Commissioner, 18 May 1904, UNA, A12/5.
[337] Wilson to Commissioner, 16 November 1905, UKNA, CO 536/3.

been shaken by the murder of a colonial official in Ankole District in May 1905 by people previously deemed docile.[338] Bugungu and neighbouring Cope were, by contrast, 'about the wildest in the settled portions of the Protectorate' according to the outgoing Commissioner.[339] The new Commissioner – renamed Governor – Henry Hesketh Bell, arrived in Uganda in May 1906, to read an annual report from the District Collector that slammed Bugungu as 'not sufficiently under control; or accustomed to British rule'.[340] The first step taken by senior officials to remedy these issues was relatively minor. The first to suffer was Mwanga, but only through a loss of status: he was demoted as Bugungu was downgraded to a sub-county (*gombolola*) of Bujenje saza above the escarpment under the strong hand of Jemusi Miti, an energetic and entrepreneurial Ganda chief.

But a far greater – though more oblique – punitive consequence awaited the whole population of Bugungu. Bell's administration adopted a legislative agenda that aimed to reduce reliance on costly and counterproductive military patrols. Bell formalised and institutionalised a suite of allied practices through resort to legalism. Among those with laws that contained potential for dealing with areas like Bugungu was the Collective Punishment Ordinance (CPO), which first began to be discussed in late 1906. It gave officials in Uganda the power to 'impose fines on all or any inhabitants of any village or district, or members of any tribe, sub-tribe or community'. The CPO in Uganda was developed by protectorate judge, Morris Carter, and was primarily aimed at the 'primitive conditions' of the residents of the eastern parts of the protectorate (which were, like Bugungu, under

[338] Justin Willis, 'Killing bwana: peasant revenge and political panic in early colonial Ankole', *JAH* 35 (1994), pp. 379-400.
[339] Commissioner to S of S, 23 November 1905, UKNA, CO 536/3.
[340] Leakey, Annual Report on the District of Unyoro, 16 May 1906, UNA, A42/67.

the sub-colonial rule of Ganda chiefs and missionaries). But it was to be applied across the protectorate. The ordinance was in part designed to avoid the 'distasteful' prospect of having to keep declaring 'disturbed districts' which 'might lead the public at home and elsewhere to think that the Protectorate generally was in a disturbed state'.[341]

Uganda's CPO was the earliest of its kind in British Africa. Carter had found inspiration in the form of certain collective responsibility features of the Burma Village Act. This was not unusual: the punitive regime in Uganda was powerfully shaped by the Indian Penal Code and the Indian Criminal Procedure Code, beginning with their application in 1902. In India, collective punishment, and related notions of collective criminality, had featured since the 1830s after the establishment of the East India Company.[342] It had been formalised in the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, as Victorian metropolitan concerns regarding recidivism transmuted within the 'ethnographic state'.[343] The Burma ordinance took the 'village' as the unit of collective responsibility. In Uganda, the CPO gave officials far more definitional flexibility, and was without clear parallel in the British empire in its overt, specific intent, and territory-wide application; the Colonial Office's William Bottomley had 'not been able to trace any colonial ordinance which this draft may be compared'. Bell's request for permission to enact the ordinance had met with some resistance in London in 1908, as Bottomley feared it represented 'a retrograde step'.[344]

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[341] Bell to Secretary of State, 21 February 1908, UKNA, CO 536/18.
[342] Radhika Singha, *A Despotism of Law: Crime and Justice in Early Colonial India* (Calcutta and Oxford, 1998), p. 135.
[343] Radhika Singha, 'Punished by Surveillance: Policing 'dangerousness' in colonial India, 1872–1918', *Modern Asian Studies* 49, no. 2 (2015), pp. 241-269.
[344] Risley, untitled notes, n.d. but 1908, UKNA, CO 536/18.

But the CPO was likely to fail to meet the administration's perceived needs in regard to Bugungu. This area was judged to be inconvenient partly owing to its geography – even beyond its provision of ample possibilities for the evasion of colonial authority. The area was considered by European visitors to lack cash crop potential, rendering it of little immediate value to the administration.[345] It was also confirmed to be insalubrious in regard to European bodies, and administrators and missionaries alike complained of Bugungu's relatively remote and inaccessible position; its northern extremity could take a few days to reach from Hoima, and the route was 'impracticable' in the wet season.[346] The administration really needed to both discipline *and evacuate* Bugungu. But the CPO did not permit mass removals. Inspiration could be taken, to a degree, from some of Bell's other legal initiatives, such as the Removal of the Undesirable Natives Ordinance, the Deportation Ordinance, and Outlying Districts Ordinance.

Useful elements were to be combined within another law: the Sleeping Sickness Ordinance. In Bunyoro, as Doyle posits, colonial medicine was used as 'an agent of social control and political advantage'.[347] The idea of compulsory mass resettlement was publicly floated by Hodges as a disease control measure in his half-yearly report in mid-1906.[348] The sleeping sickness outbreak provided proximate rhetorical justification for administrative intervention, as it did in many

[345] Speke, 'Report on the agricultural prospects and political situation in the districts of Bugungu and Chiopi', 4 November 1905, UKNA, CO 536/3.
[346] H. Boulton Ladbury diary, 18 July 1907, MAK, CMS/10/2; Susan Hicks-Beach diary, 13 February 1907, NUA, MJHLAS, HWCEAP/14/2; Nuwa Nakiwafu, letter dated 4 April 1902, quoted in Anon., 'Uganda', *CMI* 53, no. 10 (1902), pp. 773-776 (p. 776); Anon., 'The countries around Uganda', *CMI* 54, no. 7 (1903), pp. 508-520 (p. 516); Wilson to Johnston, 18 May 1904, UNA, A12/5.
[347] Doyle, *Crisis*, p. 150.
[348] A.D.P. Hodges, 'Report on Sleeping Sickness in Uganda from January 1st to June 30th, 1906', *RSSCRS* 9 (1908), pp. 3-62 (pp. 40-41).

parts of eastern and central Africa at this time.[349] But the vengeful, tutelary element of this spectacular undertaking was scarcely better concealed than the small-scale relocations that underpinned the pre-colonial forced relocations effected by the Mukama. It was to serve a disciplinary, civilising function. Hodges suggested the people of Bugungu were themselves to blame for the infection as they were prone to 'frequent and indiscriminate and probably as yet uncontrollable crossing and recrossing of the river'. He held the opinion that 'removal' was the 'only course remaining open' as the population were 'backward and full of suspicion' and '[could not] be depended on to do anything at all for themselves'.[350] By refusing to conform to the colonial state's sedentarist regulatory project, the lowlanders were seen to have forfeited their claim to inhabit Bugungu. Bell himself encountered Bugungu en route to northern Uganda in August 1906; he confirmed that, 'the natives there were very primitive'.[351]

Mass removal was to be carried out once a suitable resettlement area was identified and certain other, even more pressing matters handled. In 1907 the government embarked on evacuating the human population from the fatal fly belts around Lake Victoria to parts of the interior free from fly, in conjunction with a system of segregation camps on the lakeshore and the islands, in which people could volunteer to be treated.[352] Colonial officials in Bunyoro were also preoccupied in 1907 with other political developments, notably the campaign of widespread anti-Ganda defiance known as 'Nyangire'.Reaching its climax in April 1907, this took its name from the phrase '*nyangire abaganda*', meaning 'I have

[349] Maryinez Lyons, *The Colonial Disease: A Social History of Sleeping Sickness in Northern Zaire, 1900-1940* (Cambridge, 1992).
[350] Hodges, 'Report', pp. 40-41.
[351] Hesketh Bell, diary entry for 11 August 1906, BL, MS 78720/f.115.
[352] Hoppe, *Lords*.

refused the Baganda', and led to the arrest and deportation of about 50 chiefs – mainly Catholics – from Bunyoro.[353]

The irony was that Nyangire – the central moment of political protest in early colonial Bunyoro – demonstrated that the inhabitants of the lowlands had begun to express their submission to the colonial state. The cry 'Bunyoro for the Banyoro', as it was rendered in military intelligence reports on Nyangire, seems to have resonated far less beyond the plateau. [354] Southern and central Bunyoro – 'usually the orderly part [of the district]' – were mobilising against the Ganda chiefs, while 'Magungou [*sic*] has actually forwarded supplies, during this agitation, to their chief Jemusi [Miti] and his retinue in Hoima'.[355] In Bugungu only one individual, a long-serving sub-chief, was arrested in connection with the protest. [356] The uprising ultimately convinced the British to begin phasing out Ganda personnel in the chiefly hierarchy. But Miti held on for more than a decade. There were even suggestions in the same military intelligence reports on Nyangire that 'the Bagungu' might have potential in the colonial army – potential to transmogrify from an 'undisciplined tribe' into their moral and political antithesis: 'martial' races.[357]

Ultimately, in the minds of British officials and Bunyoro's senior chiefs, the collective reputation of the 'Mugungu' proved more difficult to shed, however.[358]

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[353] Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 96-112.
[354] 'Appendix G', in Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report no. 30, April 1907, UKNA, CO 536/13.
[355] Wilson to S. of S. for the Colonies, 25 June 1907, UKNA, CO 536/13.
[356] Guy Eden to Acting Deputy Commissioner, 11 May 1907, UNA, OPC/BOX 86/W.P./1; Guy Eden, 'Evidence on oath regarding recent Unyoro troubles', 7 June 1907, UNA, A43/?.
[357] 'Appendix G', in Uganda Protectorate Intelligence Report no. 30, April 1907, UKNA, CO 536/13.
[358] Duhaga to Leakey, 4 April 1908, UNA, A44/158.

The signs of some willingness to recognise the authority of Miti during Nyangire were dismissed by senior officials as aberrations – it was simply a 'peculiar fact'.[359] The removals were to be carried out even though the mortality rate in Bunyoro had peaked in 1908. The administration decided it would resettle the entire population in an uncultivated area above the escarpment at Kitana, mid-way along the road from Butiaba to Hoima, where they could be more easily surveilled and encouraged to supply Butiaba with labour and food.

Figure 15: 'Chief Jemusi-Miti-Kago, H.R.H., Mr. Leakey, at Butiaba'.[360]

[359] Wilson to S. of S. for the Colonies, 25 June 1907, UKNA, CO 536/13.
[360] From NUA, MJHLAS, HWCEAP/14/2/29/1.

Officials found that initial requests for the population to relocate were flatly refused by the people of Bugungu at around the turn of 1909.[361] The DC, T. Grant, sent both the mukama and chief Miti to cajole and coerce in March 1909. Some of the population, largely those occupying the inland portions more firmly under the control of Miti's subordinate Mwanga, acquiesced. But thousands of people, especially those living around the riparian northern extremity of Bugungu, actively resisted. Some hid in the papyrus and bush, but many others fled in canoes to adjacent lowland littoral zones. When Grant came to Bugungu to monitor the evacuation exercise, he was informed that 556 taxpayers had gone north to Koba District, and 200 west to Belgian Congolese territory near Mahagi Port. An unknown number of others had sought refuge either to the east in the Cope *masaza*, or in the Lado Enclave. 'If these numbers are correct', Grant reported to Entebbe concerning the runaway taxpayers, 'they would represent a total number of men women and children of about 3000; more than half of the estimated population'.[362]

[361] P. Roche, 'L'exode forcé des Bagungu', *Rapport Annuel, 1908-1909*, no. 4 (1909), pp. 1-2.
[362] Hannington to DC Nimule, 31 March 1909, UNA, A44/176; Grant to Chief Secretary, 29 March 1909, UNA, A45/115.

Figure 16: Untitled map regarding saza chieftainships (c. 1910-1916).[363]

The administration had not been sufficiently prepared for relocating this notoriously evasive population. To reassert its authority, Grant wished to demonstrate uncompromising power to locate and relocate. He licensed Miti to destroy or seize huts, food supplies, gardens and canoes in order to deter return.[364] Grant also ordered Miti to have his sub-chiefs pursue those who had absconded or remained, and to dispense 'exemplary punishments'. 'Any Bagungu found there should have their sheep and goats confiscated', he recommended. The owners of the canoes that ferried them, and the chief who harboured them, should also be 'severely punished'. Assisted by Koba's Assistant District Commssioner P.T. Hannington, and the Belgian *Chef de Secteur* at Mahagi, Miti's sub-chiefs took about a thousand people, along with their livestock, to Kitana over the remaining

[363] From UNA, A46/492.
[364] Entries under Jemusi Kago, 22 April and 11 November 1909, notebook titled 'Personal record of chiefs and influential natives', HDA; Wyndham to Chief Secretary, 24 March 1910, UNA, A46/144.

months of 1909.[365] The chief of the Gungu colony in Koba District, Wandera and his many followers, were forced to move to Kitana in December 1909. Appointed a year earlier, Wandera appears to have been particularly keen to hold on to his new, elevated position; and had repeatedly ignored instructions to relocate.[366]

The character of displacement of the people of Bugungu contrasted considerably with that of the other part of the Bunyoro that was to experience compulsory depopulation in early 1912. Among the Palwo of Cope area, it was not the whole population who were affected by disease and displacement. It was largely the people of Kihukya saza, directly adjacent to Bugungu. Moreover, after the chaos of 1909, Entebbe chose to take a less confrontational approach in Kihukya. It would take almost two years of discussions and deliberations before the government issued the instructions to the inhabitants about relocation. People were given a choice over locations, so were more willing to move. Different people within this population moved to different locations from among the variety officially made available to them. As a consequence, the minority who had survived the disease left with little or no resistance, many settling outside Bunyoro District in the vicinity of the road leading north to Gulu in Nile Province, where they were to assimilate with peoples with whom there were already deep cultural and social ties.[367]

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[365] P.T. Hannington (Asst. District Commissioner in charge, Koba) to the Chef de Poste, Mahagi, 27 March 1909, AA, AIMO/1694; Nile Province Annual Report 1908-09, UNA, A45/144; Annual Report for the Koba District, 1909-1910, UNA, A46/249; A.R. Dunbar, *A History of Bunyoro-Kitara* (Nairobi, 1965), pp. 116, 128 (f.5). Dunbar cites 'Record of Tours [B]Unyoro District 1909-1910', which could not be located at HDA.

[366] P.T. Hannington, ADC Koba to DC Nimule, 31 March 1909, UNA, A44/176; Annual Report for the Koba District, 1909-1910, UNA, A46/249.

[367] R. Paske-Smith to Chief Secretary, 30 March 1912, UNA, A46/896; Soff, 'A history', pp. 161-173.

The authorities opportunistically gave the space cleared of people – newly classified as a 'Sleeping Sickness Infected Area' – over to another purpose. Above the escarpment the Budonga Game Reserve, a much smaller area covering about 500 square miles of the eponymous forest, had been first established by Commissioner Johnston in 1899. For several years, subsequent administrations had resisted demands made for expanded reserves and tighter game regulations from the London-based Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of Empire (SPWFE), a patrician body of big game hunters which had been formed in 1903. But after the evacuation of Bugungu, Acting Governor Stanley Tompkins recognised that redefining the boundaries of the Budongo Game Reserve accordingly might satisfy not only the SPWFE, but also, with regards to Budonga Forest, the commercial interests whose rubber concessions were experiencing 'very considerable damage' due to elephants.[368] In April 1910, he suggested substituting Bugungu County for the forest – a move almost tantamount to a complete relocation of the Budongo Game Reserve. Once the Cope *masaza* were evacuated, the boundaries were modified so as to extend the reserve into this area. The new boundaries of the renamed Bunyoro Game Reserve were declared in December 1910. Bugungu's people had been removed; their land had been given over to wild animals.

[368] Tomkins to S of S, 18 April 1910, UKNA, CO 536/33; Wyndham to Chief Secretary, 24 March 1910, UNA, A46/144.

Figure 17: 'Plan to illustrate game reserves under Game Regulations 1906 and by Proclamation Published in the Official Gazette of 1st September 1909'.[369]

Figure 18: 'Map to show the boundaries of Bunyoro Game Reserve' (1910).[370]

[369] From UKNA, CO 536/33.
[370] From UKNA, CO 536/33.

'The Bagungu location': administration, missionisation, and identification in exile

Exile and displacement had radical socio-cultural consequences for those subject to it. But the pattern that obtained in Kitana-Kigorobya was quite different to that elsewhere on the *mangoota*-ravaged peripheries of the historical kingdoms of the Uganda Protectorate. In Bunyoro's southern, more compact neighbour Buganda 'sub-ethnicities' or 'sub-identities' were suppressed by Ganda elites, or displaced by newly acquired religious identities, owing to the sectarian delineation of county chieftainships.[371] Certain hitherto politically and culturally distinct peoples 'became Ganda' after their colonial incorporation into Buganda as they were drawn into its orbit by missionary education and by the manifold opportunities for material gain, prestige and social advancement in the economic and political core of protectorate.[372] But on the north-western peripheries of the colonial backwater Bunyoro an alternative dynamic unfolded.

In certain ways, Anglo-Nyoro attitudes towards and intentions for the exiles were extremely conservative, but radical in effect.[373] Though now under a Nyoro-Gahya saza chief in Bugahya County, dislocated from their 'tribal territory' by the very state that had insisted on such a notion, the exiles were in many ways treated as a though they were still in Bugungu. The exiles now occupied an area known

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[371] Shane Doyle, 'Immigrants and indigenes: the Lost Counties Dispute and the evolution of ethnic identity in colonial Buganda', *JEAS* 3, no. 2 (2009), pp. 284-302 (288-289).
[372] Aidan Stonehouse, 'Peripheral Identities in an African State: A History of Ethnicity in the Kingdom of Buganda since 1884', unpublished PhD dissertation (Leeds, 2012).
[373] For similar attitudes with regards to the Vuma relocated to mainland Buganda, see Hoppe, *Lords*, p. 65.

officially as 'the Bagungu Location'. The name was important in itself. The people moved were settled together, as a 'group' called the Bagungu, in a way that gave a new significance to the ethnonym for them in their lives and interactions with authority. At the Location they remained under the immediate authority of the Gungu 'hereditary ruler' Mwanga, who remained as sub-county chief, bearing the title *kaijongolo*, until 1918. The longevity of his tenure was unusual in a colonial district where chiefs' positions were intensely insecure.[374] It was rendered all the more remarkable by the fact that Mwanga's claims to 'traditional' chiefly authority were somewhat spurious in nature, and his administrative failings and personal indebtedness 'caused great trouble'.[375] He had also further displeased Bunyoro's Anglican establishment in 1913 by becoming a Muslim. Going by the name 'Kassim', this 'Mugungu' was consequently a 'bête noir of the chiefs', an ADC noted.[376] His own chiefs openly challenged him; he was thought to have 'little authority' over them.[377] But Mwanga-Kassim held on largely because the idea of a hereditary Gungu chieftaincy had become became embedded within official discourse.

Mwanga-Kassim's remarkably durable chiefship provided the embodiment of an increasingly primary notion of difference. His extended period in office also served to naturalise the idea that the people of Bugungu – unlike those elsewhere in Bunyoro – needed to be under the authority of one of 'their own'. In this interwar period, senior chiefs were more important politically and symbolically

[374] Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 102-106.
[375] 30.09.1916, Bugahya Touring Book, volume 1, HDA.
[376] Entry under Mwanga in notebook titled 'Personal record of chiefs and influential natives', HDA.
[377] 13.11.1912, 11.1912, 3.1916, notebook titled 'Personal record of chiefs and influential natives', HAD.

than they were before or after. Though Mukama Duhaga, who reigned from 1902 to 1924, sat atop the pyramid of local authority, he constituted a poor source of patronage and weak symbol of identity. Unlike the protectorate's other historical kingdoms, Bunyoro had not been permitted to sign an agreement guaranteeing its ruler certain rights and powers; Duhaga had ceased to play any role in public rituals of well-being, and was overshadowed by other men, like Miti.[378] The communal gaze was therefore drawn to ostensibly lower levels of authority, like the one occupied by Mwanga-Kassim.

At Kitana-Kigorobya the exiles were brought into slightly closer contact with Christianity and Runyoro literacy. For benefactors back home, one Anglican missionary painted a rather hopeful picture of what was progressing in and around the 'very nice church' which had been built by the exiles in their first full year on the plateau. She reported that 'the teacher had his hands full', but 'most of them understand Lunyoro fairly well and are most keen on learning to read'.[379] Some individuals and families enthusiastically orientated themselves towards the culture and the new opportunities associated with Bunyoro's core. Perhaps the most committed was Zakayo K. Kwamya, who relocated and became a pastor at Masindi, adopting Nyoro-Gahya ways of the plateau while cutting himself off from his Gungu past.[380]

But few stayed committed. Contact was still rather tenuous; the attraction remained limited. Kwamya was rather exceptional. It was more common –

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[378] Dunbar, *A History*, p. 108. His nickname was '*omutuma gw'ibaale*', meaning 'heart of stone'.
[379] G.M. Flint, Annual Letter, 22 October 1910, CMS, G3/AL/1910.
[380] Ints. Gungu3a & 3b; Zakayo K. Kwamya, 'Okufa kw'omwana wa Rev. H. Bowers, Emasindi', *Ebifa mu Buganda* 220 (1925), pp. 109-110.

though still extremely rare – to see men pursue literacy but not likeness through the acquisition of Runyoro in these years. An early Anglican convert called Yosiya K. Wairindi was baptised in Hoima at the age of 22 in 1912, and went on to work as a clerk, but remained a key figure in the exiled community.[381] Little in the way of foundations for Christianity had been established in Bugungu before the evacuation. Even after almost a decade in exile, one Catholic missionary observed that there were serious 'obstacles' even for the 'preservation' of an extremely small group of adherents. The old were 'superstitious' to 'the highest degree', the women were 'crazy about dancing', and – in a Rabelaisian allusion to both alcohol consumption and local divination practices – 'everyone loved the *dive bouteille*'.[382] Christianity was not a route to integration into a collective Nyoro identity that offered them advantages.

One key obstacle to evangelisation was the lack of familiarity with the written vernacular language used by the CMS. Missionaries noted that the exiles 'speak their own language'.[383] But Lugungu did not receive canonisation-via-codification by missionaries like Toro District's minority Lukonzo language in the 1910s. Even the Nyoro-Gahya elite did not think that the bible was really in Runyoro. Many of the Nyoro-Gahya Christian elite joined hands with their neighbours in Tooro to overturn the CMS's policy that they must all make do with a Luganda Old Testament. But they maintained that the 'Runyoro' New Testament, translated by a Tooro-based CMS linguist, was actually 'Lutoro'. '[T]he Banyoro in Hoima do not like the books', because some of the words in New Testament were 'said to be

[381] H.W.K Muhigwa, 'Okubika',*Mwebingwa*, 1 November 1954.
[382] 17 January 1919, Diaire Hoima, A.G.M.Afr, D.OR.165.
[383] G.M. Flint, Annual Letter, 22 October 1910, CMS, G3/AL/1910.

obscene in the Lunyoro language spoken in Hoima', reported one missionary.[384] To the exiles, the vehicular language the CMS codified was both alien to them and distinct to the actual language of the uplands. Cultural reproduction and homogenisation continued in the shadows of Nyoro culture.

The nature of the arrangement at Kitana-Kigorobya insulated and isolated the exiles collectively. The fact that a large tract of uncultivated ground was one granted by the state obviated the need for the exiles to develop social ties outside of the location on the Nyoro-Gahya plateau in order to secure access to land. It decreased the opportunities for interactions via the waterways with speakers of the region's non-Bantu languages. In a complementary, simultaneous process, the rupture of relocation stimulated a renegotiation, broadening and circumscription of frames of action by attenuating clan-level authority linked to fixed shrines and place-specific knowledges.

The population's concentration and their location away from the lake on what was to them, to quote one missionary, 'the outskirts of a foreign country' provided exceptional cause and opportunity for extended, common self-reflection, and action.[385] Referred to using the local common noun *kidemu*, their displacement and exile was a story of epochal rupture, rather than continuity, even against a backdrop of conquest and disease. The exiles endured considerable hardship in their new environment in the mid-to-late 1910s, owing to the introduction of forced labour, food requisitions, chronic insecurity over land tenure, catastrophic

[384] Miller to Baylis, 5 August 1907, CMS,G3 A7/o/1907.
[385] Hoima Mission Diary, 17 January 1919, A.G.M.Afr, D.OR.165.

famines, and rinderpest epidemics.[386] It discouraged many exiles from putting down roots – both literally and figuratively.

'The Bagungu question': indiscipline, insecurity, and evasion, 1909-1919

The people of the Bagungu Location refused to suffer meekly, however. Insubordination continued in pronounced fashion in exile. They were 'still very wild', explained one Catholic White Father, a couple of years after the move.[387] Game and sleeping sickness ordinances were flouted spectacularly, bringing large parts of the community into conflict with their chief. In one episode in 1913-1914, 35 men were arrested by Mwanga-Kassim out of a 100-strong group who killed some fifty head of game after they breached the quarantined area around the Waki River in the vicinity of Butyabwa. In response, the chief was subjected to multiple acts of arson.[388]

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[386] Int. Gungu 9a; Strathairn to Chief Secretary, 18 November 1910, UNA, A46/536; Grant to Chief Secretary, 18 April 1910, UNA, A46/144; Diary entries for March 1916 & 30 September 1916, HDA, loose notebook titled 'Personal record of chiefs and influential natives, Bugahya'; Rayne ADC Hoima, 'Report on the Hoima District for July 1916', 4 August 1916, UNA, Prov(N)/Box 1/0650; Watson, 'Report on the Northern Province for the month ended the 30th April 1919', 27 May 1919, UNA, Prov(N)/BOX 3/12; PCNP to Chief Secretary, 'Report on the Northern Province for the month ended the 31st December 1917', 6 February 1918, UNA, Prov(N)/BOX1/0760.

[387] P. B. Drost, 'Une tournée dans le district de Hoima', *MAPB (Canada)* 8, no. 1 (1912), pp. 9-15 ('Ce peuple est encore très sauvage').

[388] Place, 'Report on Hoima District for January 1914', 31 January 1914, UNA, Prov(N)/ BOX 1/0405; Place, 'Report on Hoima District for February 1914', 4 March 1914, UNA, Prov(N)/Box 1/0405. For more on arson, authority, and roof materials in colonial Uganda, see Carol Summers, ''Subterranean evil' and 'tumultuous riot in Buganda: authority and alienation at King's College, Budo, 1942', *JAH* 47 (2006), pp. 93-113 (103, fn. 37).

Certain figures made known their desire to return to Bugungu. The Acting Governor Tomkins in 1910 expressed the belief that the evacuated area would offer 'little attraction, if any'.[389] But this presumption had proved misguided. Demands for return were spearheaded by certain ambitious men, aiming to capitalise on Mwanga's unpopularity in order to extend their political authority and wealth. Among them was a charismatic parish chief called Yubu or Job (from the Old Testament book of the same name) Katongole. Though he hailed from a rather insignificant clan, Katongole had become influential among the exiles as Mwanga's authority weakened. The people of the Location came to know him as 'Kyamukatuka' – a nickname derived from the verb *kukatuka*, meaning 'to stride purposefully and quickly'. Katongole conjured a community and a homeland for whom he claimed the authority to speak. Using the key symbol of political authority in the Great Lakes, the drum, he summoned the exiles for meetings, and attempted to enjoin them to support his crusade by publicly articulating his visionary dreams of Bugungu's future prosperity.[390] Katongole was well known to Anglican missionaries and colonial officials; one of his sons, Eliphaz Gahwera, attended the CMS' school in Hoima for the sons of chiefs, and later, in 1922, was to become the first person from Bugungu to progress to the famous King's College Budo in Buganda.[391]

Men like Kyamukatuka petitioned the colonial authorities citing 'promises' supposedly made to them in 1909. While on tour in June 1913, the DC received 'anxious enquiries'. '[T]hey appear to be under the impression that the Medical

[389] Tomkins to S. of S, 30 September 1910, UKNA, CO 536/35.
[390] Koosya Bahoire, 'Kuruga mu Kidemu Bwozo Bubaagiirye', n.d. but 2000s, KBP.
[391] 'Eliphazi Katongole', n.d. but c.1949, HDA, notebook 'Chiefs records Bujenje'; Beattie, *Nyoro*, p. 206.

Officer (Dr Van Someren) at the time (…) told them that they could return after five years'. Such assurances may well have been made. In early 1909, the sleeping sickness commission's David Bruce, had made similar statements to the people of Lake Victoria's Buvuma islands.[392] But the veracity of these past assurances was dismissed by the provincial commissioner. He thought it 'unlikely' that said official would have 'given them any hopes of returning within a given number of years'.[393] Under the Bell-era sleeping sickness control policy of 'concentration', the restriction of populations to fly-free areas was considered a permanent measure.

Increasingly indignant, many of the exiles returned regardless. The battles of 1909 only represented the first engagements in a protracted struggle. Never before had population removal been attempted in this area on anywhere near this scale, or with this suddenness and force; the British had mustered considerable resources in their efforts to present their power as irresistible. But the people of Bugungu remained unconvinced of the colonial state's power to maintain such outlay. Sleeping sickness inspectors in 1912 noted evidence on the shorelines that Bugungu was no longer uninhabited.[394] In early 1913 there were 'rumours of exodus' from Kitana-Kigorobya of 'numbers of Bagungu' to the narrow littoral lowlands of Lake Albert in Congo, Koba, and the southern section of the Lado Enclave which had been transferred to the Sudan administration in June 1910 on Leopold's death (but was to remain unadministered until it became Uganda's West Nile District in a territory exchange on 1 April 1914).[395] Some evictees

[392] Soff, 'A history', p. 148.
[393] Guy Eden, Report on Northern Province for May 1913, UNA, A46/790.
[394] UP, *AMSR 1912* (Entebbe, 1913), p. 73.
[395] Guy Eden, Report on Northern Province for March 1913, UNA, A46/790.

absconded to where friends and family – often former inhabitants of Bugungu who had escaped the dragnet – resided outside the reach of the British. In Lado, 'large numbers of Bagungu' inhabited the Panyamur flats under a Lwo-speaking chief called Wambidi and, closer to the Mayongo River where the boundary with the Belgian Congo lay, his uncle Okello.

While some settled and assimilated, communication by means of canoe between dispersed littoral settlements had surreptitiously continued, 'uninterrupted' by the sleeping sickness control measures, officials noted. 110 canoes were reportedly kept at Butyabwa (Butiaba) where, in 'the two mile restricted area' were to be found natives of nearly every tribe in Uganda, under a headman from Buleega across the water, but 'the local natives' were 'chiefly Bagungu'. Across the Victoria Nile from Bugungu, the clandestine Koba District settlement was home to 25 canoes and functioned as both the 'connecting link' between these dispersed settlements as the main base from which to launch illicit forays. According to security reports from 1913, there was a 'Bagungu village' of 30 huts 'among the local Nilotic Aluru' from which men reportedly made journeys overland on a near daily basis to fish in the shallows of the Victoria Nile.[396]

Beyond the risk of infection, these settlements and movements were perceived by the colonial administration to pose other sorts of threats to their authorities. The Koba 'Bagungu village' was once more under Wandera who, determined to reclaim the semi-autonomous political space he had had carved out for himself, had not been kept in the upland area for long. Wandera constituted a challenge

[396] Turpin, 'Gunrunning in Unyoro', 11 September 1913, UNA, C/Box 7/C.0158; Guy Eden (PCNP), 'Alleged traffic in slaves and firearms between Uganda and Congo, 9 October 1913, UKNA, CO 536/62

to both Mwanga's and the mukama's authority. But these renegade populations also concerned colonial officials reeling from the Lamogi Rebellion of 1912 which had been triggered by disarmament policies in north-western Gulu District. The British were increasingly concerned that the 'excellent canoemanship' of the Bugungu people was 'in great demand by smugglers' who had developed a cross-border network of gun-running centring on the lightly administered west bank of the upper Albert Nile in Lado.[397]

In 1913-1917 the administration unsuccessfully attempted to resolve these issues. The Sleeping Sickness Ordinance of 1913, included Koba within the newly gazetted 'Nile Infected Area'. This measure provided a convenient basis from which to shut down this network and confine all 'the Bagungu' to Kitana-Kigorobya. But an administration constrained by the demands of the Great War found it difficult to enforce this ordinance. In April 1916, the DCs of Bunyoro and West Nile co-operated in the removal of some '620 Bagungu' from Koba to Kitana.[398] But a few years later people were still returning to the Victoria Nile estuary.[399] The Bunyoro administration's attempts to rein in those across the Albert Nile and Lake Albert proved even more unsuccessful, as they generated inter- and intra-territorial debates about where exactly 'the Bagungu' belonged. The mukama's claims on, and efforts to relocate, part of 'the Bagungu' of the West Nile Panyamur flats population caused friction in 1917 between chiefs and were rejected 'emphatically' by the new West Nile DC, Arthur E. Weatherhead, who

[397] Turpin, 'Gunrunning in Unyoro', 11 September 1913, UNA, C/Box 7/C.0158; Guy Eden (PCNP), 'Alleged traffic in slaves and firearms between Uganda and Congo, 9 October 1913, UKNA, CO 536/62.
[398] Northern Province Annual Report for 1916-1917, UNA, A46/810.
[399] 'Report on the Northern Province for the year ended the 31st March 1919', 6 May 1919, UNA, A46/811.

had already offered this group the chance to move back to Bunyoro.[400] In addition, the 'Bagungu question' – regarding part of the population under Chief Atwikende's 'Bagungu settlement' at Mahagi – had become the 'source of the greatest trouble' between West Nile and Belgian Congo. All these problems were owing, Weatherhead maintained, to the fact that the 'Bagungu do not belong exclusively to east of Lake Albert and River Nile, but were as any tradition goes, settled both West and East'.[401]

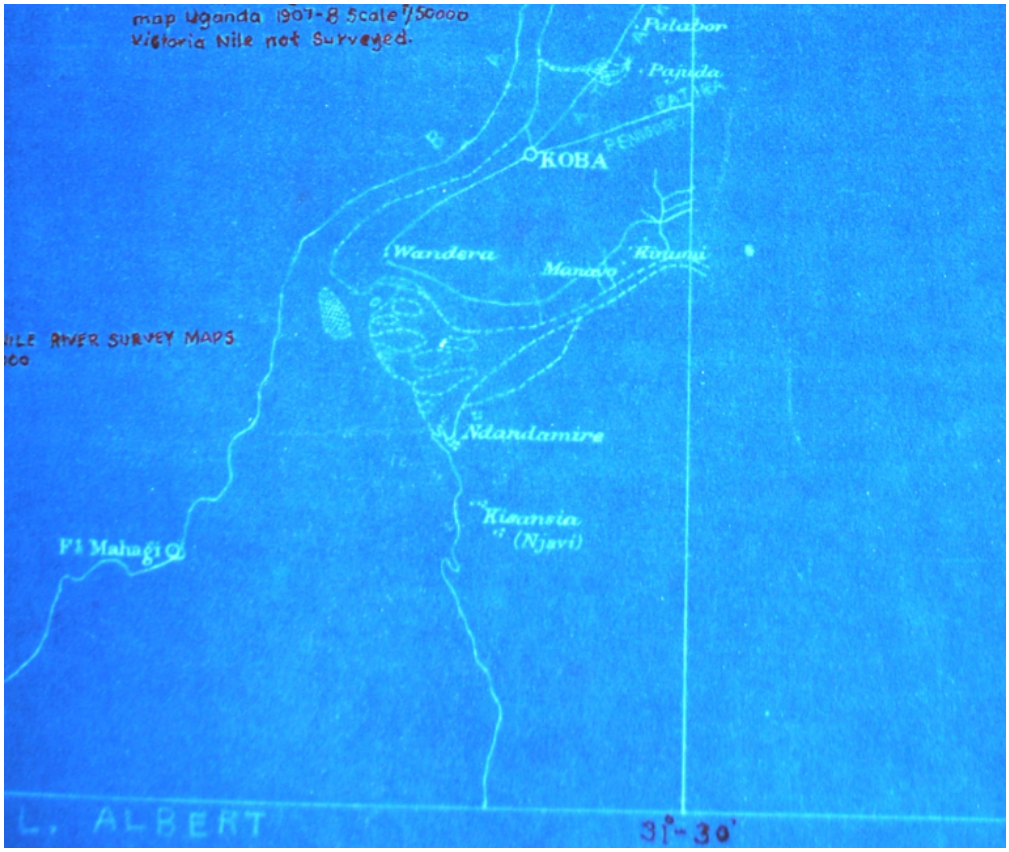

Figure 19: Untitled map from Anglo-Belgian Boundary Commission (c.1912-1913).[402]

[400] Ag.DCWN to PCNP, 3 August 1917, UNA, Prov(N)/BOX 3/5; Monthly Report, July 1917, UNA, Prov(N)BOX 3/5.
[401] DCWN to DC Masindi, 12 March 1919, UNA, Prov(N)/BOX1/0507/C.
[402] From UNA, A46/993.

The politics of reclamation, 1918-1922

The practical challenges of keeping Bugungu closed, and demands for it to be reopened would have perhaps led to nothing had official thinking not changed on various counts around the end of World War One. The colonial administration, particularly after Robert Coryndon's arrival as governor in 1918, had begun to seriously reconsider the future of the all the Protectorate's Sleeping Sickness Infected Areas. The concentration policy had come under intense scrutiny during the hardships endured over the course of the war, but the war itself took away manpower required for investigations. No longer content to abandon these potentially productive areas, Coryndon's administration adopted a strategy of controlled human resettlement – combining reclamation *and* concentration, to be overseen by American entomologist William Fiske. This fresh approach was underpinned by new scientific opinion that the fly could only exist precariously or sparsely in territory densely inhabited and developed by human populations taking active measures to maintain clearings.[403]

Reclamation also reflected a shift in economic thinking with regards to Africans. Coryndon's foremost concern was economic development; the protectorate's reliance on an imperial grant-in-aid had only ceased immediately prior to his arrival. In the wake of the post-war slump which virtually wiped out the already limited presence of European plantation agriculture, the governor increasingly came to believe that Uganda's economic future lay in African hands. Peasant production of cotton, which accounted for 90 per cent of the country's export

[403] W.F. Fiske, 'Report of Entomologist', 31 January 1920, UNA, A46/206.

trade in 1920, was central to this vision.[404] But this administration had also come to realise the fishing industry's potential.[405] Re-opening of the Bugungu fishery was expected to 'increase the material property' of the population, as one administrator put it.[406] A sport-fishing enthusiast who had obtained a record catch on Lake Albert in 1920, [407] Coryndon was no doubt encouraged by news that a profitable fishery using modern gear was beginning to develop on the south-eastern shore of the lake in the Belgian Congo, developed by a Portuguese Goan called Antonio Coutinho in response to demand from the gold mining complex at Kilo-Moto. Société des Mines d'Or de Kilo-Moto (Sokimo), the firm that ran the mine, had introduced fish to workers' rations in 1919.[408]

Reopening the eastern littoral of Lake Albert to settlement might also serve the interests of more capital-intensive speculative investments from the colonial metropole. Africans had long been aware of what would turn out to be oil seeps and emissions of gas in the rift.[409] Attracted by these signs, on the eve of the war, Nairobi-based Old Etonian William Brittlebank had been granted a five-mile-wide concession covering the whole of Lake Albert eastern shoreline by the administration of Governor Frederick Jackson.[410] But Brittlebank had been

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[404] Christopher P. Youé, *Robert Thorne Coryndon : proconsular imperialism in Southern and Eastern Africa 1897-1925* (Gerrards Cross, 1986).
[405] W.F. Fiske, 'A History of Sleeping Sickness and Reclamation in Uganda', July 1926, UKNA, CO 536/140; C.R.S. Pitman, 'Uganda 1935-1951', KCL, FCO 2 DT433.227.
[406] PCNP to CS, 25 April 1922, UNA, A46/797; PCNP A.H. Watson, 'Report on the Northern Province for the year ended the 31st December 1921'20 February 1922, UNA, A46/2694
[407] 'Fishing Records at Butiaba', RHL, Mss.Afr.s.633; G.H. Straker, 'Fishing on the Nile', *Fishing Gazette,* 23 August 1924.
[408] Agayo Bakonzi, 'The gold mines of Kilo-Moto in northeastern Zaire, 1905-1960', PhD (Wisconsin, 1982), p. 140.
[409] Roscoe, *Bakitara*, p. 32 (f.1).
[410] J.P. Wilson to Commissioner, 29 December 1902, UNA, A12/2; John Boyes, *The company of adventurers* (London, 1928), pp. 90-92.

unsuccessful in interesting investors in funding oil exploration at this time.[411] Following a war that had proven the demand for petroleum products, and enticed by the director of Uganda's new Geological Department early survey reports, various companies including the large Anglo-Persian Oil Company circled Brittlebank's concession, while others areas fancied an area almost immediately to the east, taking in part of Bugungu.[412]

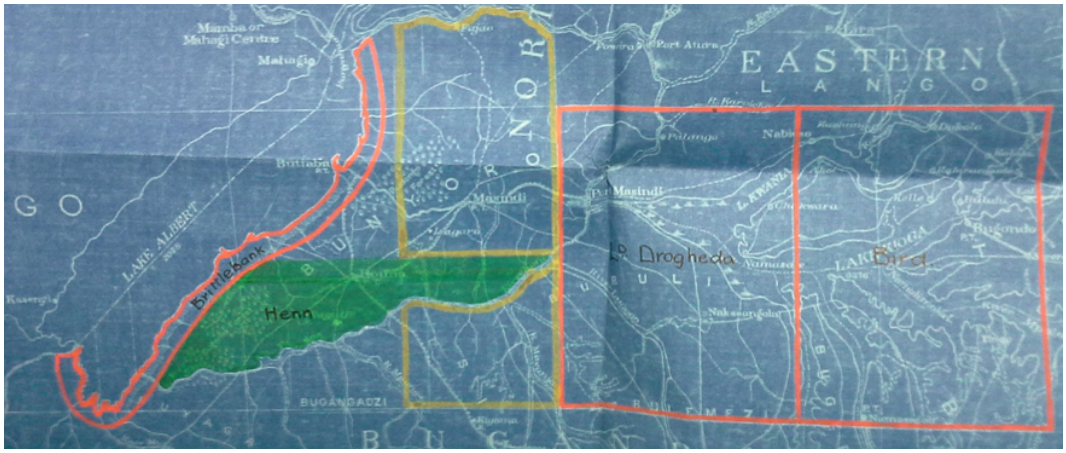

Figure 20: Untitled map showing concession areas under negotiation (1920).[413]

Rumours circulated in the Bagungu Location in early 1919 about the possibility that the exiles might be 'called back to their country of origin'.[414] They turned out to be true. The administration's designs for reclamation focused initially, in 1920, on the Ssese islands of Lake Victoria. By October 1921, the government had decided that it would re-open part of Lake Albert's shoreline in early 1922.

[411] Brittlebank to Under S. of S., 3 October 1914, UKNA, CO 536/74.
[412] Hyde Villiers to Under S. of S., 18 October 1918, UKNA, CO 536/92; Coryndon to Under S. of S., 18 February 1920, UKNA, CO 536/107; Ironside to Coryndon, 9 April 1920, UNA, A46/2023; Bernard Wright to Under S. of S., 17 July 1920, UKNA, CO 536/106; Gibson to the Land Officer, 16 July 1920, UNA, A46/2023.
[413] From UKNA, CO 536/104.
[414] Hoima Mission Diary, 17 January 1919, A.G.M.Afr, D.OR.165.

Conclusion

This audacious, sudden display of coercive state power in 1909 did not overawe the populace into docility. But classificatory violence, masquerading as disease control, was to have various profound, unintended collectivising consequences for the political subjectivities of the few thousand who experienced it. Previous exceptional and exemplary large-scale violence at the hands of state authorities, such as the Nyoro chiefs of Kabaleega's era, had been experienced unevenly, as it was determined by a politics of loyalty. In contrast, the experience of forced displacement was shared; it inscribed putative ethno-civilisational hierarchies through violence, shaping a collective sense of self that had previously been of little direct political, social, and affective relevance, serving as a foundational episode of tribal deracination. *Kidemu* was imprinted on the political imagination among the exiles at the same time as it effaced the diverse claims of other African peoples who had occupied and shaped the plains before 1909. Like other acts of colonial violence, it was to have 'lasting effects on the way people perceived and dealt with the state'.[415] As subsequent decades were to attest, acts of collectivising punishment were never fully shelved by colonial officials and their agents as an instruments in the creation and consolidation of the state authority in Bugungu.

[415] C. Vaughan, ''Demonstrating the Machine Guns': Rebellion, Violence and State Formation in Early Colonial Darfur', *JICH* 42, no. 2 (2014), pp. 286-307.

CHAPTER FOUR: *Civilisation and its discontents: rewilding Bugungu, c. 1922-c.1938*

The return to Bugungu permitted by the colonial authorities in early 1922 was not quite what Katongole claimed to have foreseen in his dreams. The returnees quickly found themselves caught between competing conservative impulses within an empire reeling from the destruction of the First World War. Colonial states turned to spatial segregation to protect the human and animal populations from both each other and the caustic potential of 'Western civilisation'.[416] This post-lapsarian moment witnessed, on one hand, the rise of both the nature preservation movement, spearheaded by metropolitan aristocrats and eco-tourist settler capital, and, on the other, indirect rule discourses valorising 'tradition' and 'noble savagery'. [417] Among colonial officials, the valences of ethno-civilisational stereotyping underwent resignification and the nature of classificatory violence changed. This chapter explores the messy compromises through which the colonial state attempted to reconcile these ideas, interests and competing economic arguments related to European consumption and African production.

[416] Roderick P. Neumann, 'Africa's 'Last Wilderness': Reordering Space for Political and Economic Control in Colonial Tanzania, Africa 71, no. 4 (2001), pp. 641-665; Corey Ross, 'Tropical' Nature as Global Patrimoine', *Past & Present* 226, no. 10 (2015), pp. 214-239.
[417] On these discourses see John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), 318-341; Roderick Neumann, 'Ways of seeing Africa: colonial recasting of African society and landscape in Serengeti National Park', *Ecumene* 2, no. 2 (1995), pp. 149-69.

Civilisation, nature, and punishment in Bugungu, c.1922-c.1930

The 'second Bugungu' differed from that of old in significant ways. For one, there was the matter of administrative status: ambitious families like Katongole's were to be disappointed by the lack of new chiefly offices entailed in reclamation. Bugungu remained a sub-county of Bujenje – the *saaza* chiefship which was to remain in the hands of Miti until 1930. Soon after Mwanga had passed away in Kitana-Kigorobya, his sub-county-level role as 'chief of the Bagungu' was transferred back to Bugungu and taken up by Mwanga's heir, Mukukuusa, in 1922.[418]

The habitable size of Bugungu was much reduced, moreover. Returnees were only allowed to inhabit what was officially known as the 'Bugungu Exempted Area' – a short, five-mile-deep strip of the lakeshore plains (coterminous, maybe not entirely coincidentally, with the Bugungu section of Brittlebank's oil concession). Down the middle of this narrow strip ran the road from Ndandamire near the lowlands' north-western tip to within one mile of the Waiga River. The area to the east of the road but within the Exempted Area was open only for cultivation. On the basis of a brief October 1921 investigation, Senior Medical Officer for Sleeping Sickness G.D.H. Carpenter believed that the land surrounding this area needed to be avoided due to the risk certain tsetse-infested rivers still posed with regards to sleeping sickness.[419] The areas immediately to the Exempted Area's south, east

[418] Sandford to PCNP, 14 July 1922, UNA, A46/164; Interview with George Rwakaikara, 20 October 1968, CRL, EISP/B/8.
[419] UP, *AMSR 1921* (Entebbe, 1922), p. 93; Edward Duke Of Windsor and Patrick R. Chalmers, *Sport and travel in East Africa* (London, 1934), pp. 68-69.

and, across the river north into Gulu District, remained a 'Sleeping Sickness Infected Area', known locally as *karantini*, from the English 'quarantine'.

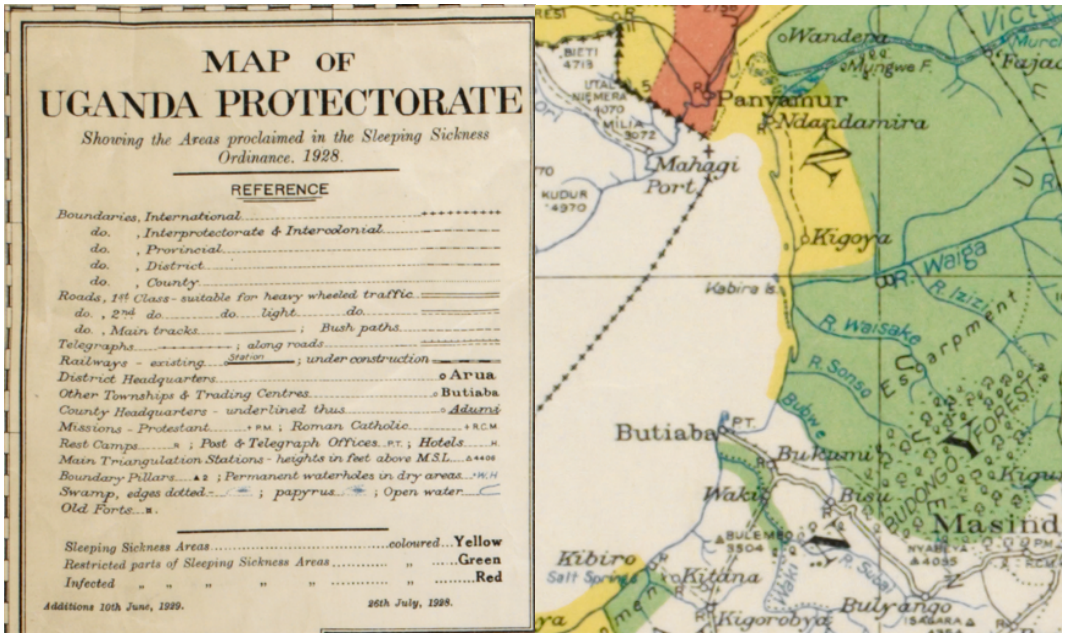

Figure 21: 'Map of Uganda Protectorate showing the areas proclaimed in the Sleeping Sickness Ordinance, 1928' (cropped by present author).[420]

Bugungu Exempted Area remained part of the Bunyoro Game Reserve, however. Uganda's Governor Coryndon did not view the game reserves as sacrosanct; he maintained that 'legitimate settlement' and 'industrial development cannot be prohibited or restricted (...) in order to preserve the game'. He resisted the creation of further game reserves, arguing that the *whole* of the Bunyoro district in effect functioned like an 'inviolable' reserve owing to the huge quantities of wild game that lived their 'unmolested' lives 'from birth to natural death'.[421] But where actual reserves had already been established, such as in the case of Bunyoro Game

[420] (Entebbe, Survey Department, 1929).
[421] Robert T. Coryndon, 'The preservation of big game', *JSPWFE* 3 (1907), 68-72; Robert T. Coryndon, 'Elephants in Uganda', *SPFEJ* 1 (1921), pp. 27-30.

Reserve, he did not abolish them. The governor was a keen hunter, and a committed member of SPFE, whose full opprobrium he was not prepared to risk.

Coryndon's administration did not agonise over the conditions of Bugungu's reopening. The administration was aware of the dramatic increase in animals that had occurred over the previous 13 years.[422] It was reputed to be home to 'some of the largest tuskers in Africa'.[423] But nature and culture presumably simply had to co-exist in the Exempted Area. The line between them, in the official mind, was less clear in regard to the 'wild' Gungu than it was for other peoples. This dehumanising, romanticising view of people like the Gungu owed much to the fact that they were not really cultivators per se; they were 'a tribe of impoverished fishermen', with a 'wholesome respect' for the hippopotamus, 'as having hunted them, 'knew their capabilities'. The Gungu also possessed a similar 'respect' for the elephant.[424] Pre-colonial notions of ethno-civilisational hierarchies linked to regard to livelihoods interacted with and reinforced colonial scales of human kind. The respect putatively demonstrated by the people of Bugungu towards the dangerous animals was not reciprocated.[425]

The years that followed witnessed a closing of the narrow window of opportunity that had enabled the exiles to regain a foothold in the plains. The matter of human-wildlife conflict in such areas increasingly detained officialdom. Game reserves took on new meaning across the region over the 1920s, as the principle of separating human and animal populations became established as the way to

[422] G.D.H. Carpenter, diary entries for 29 October & 31 October 1921, LSHTM.
[423] G. Archer to S. of S., 'Suggested programme', 19 August 1924, UKNA, CO 536/132.
[424] Pitman to Chief Secretary, 'Game Report', 7 May 1926, UNA, A46/2587.
[425] Int. Gungu 15a; Koosya Bahoire, 'Kuruga mu Kidemu Bwozo Bubaagiirye', n.d. but 2000s, KBP.

preserve wildlife. Recommendations for revision of game laws, game control, and the role and location of game reserves were put forward from 1922 to 1924 by two official committees and a report during Archer's administration.[426] The colonial government consequently maintained the need to strictly partition the protectorate into 'elephant and non-elephant areas', i.e. game reserves and cultivated areas respectively. The reserves would function as 'closed districts', where neither access nor hunting was permitted.[427] These spaces would contain the elephant herds that had been driven away from human habitation by hunters employed in elephant control.

The existence of the Bugungu Exempted Area in the Bunyoro Game Reserve did not fit this new paradigm. Officials were divided about how best to make nature and society spatially distinct; some fantasised about drastic action. Geoffrey Archer, the hunter-naturalist who served as governor from 1922 to 1925, contended that the government could not 'take upon itself the protection of all scattered crops in the remoter areas of outlying districts' such as the 'waste places in Bunyoro'. He asserted, somewhat euphemistically, that the inhabitants of such 'should be *induced* to move to the settled and closely cultivated districts' (emphasis added) where they could be 'given protection' and brought 'under better administrative control'.[428]

Archer's position on the Bugungu settlement and his dispositions were shared by the men who came to dominate the Game Department established in 1925. The

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[426] Geoffrey Francis Archer, *Personal and Historical Memoirs of an East African Administrator* (Edinburgh, 1963), pp. 163-164.
[427] Charles F.M. Swynnerton, *Report on the control of elephants in Uganda* (Entebbe, 1924).
[428] G. Archer (Governor) to Devonshire (Secretary of State), 30 April 1923, UKNA, CO 536/125.

Game Warden Charles R.S. Pitman, who had served as an officer in the Indian Army before coming to Kenya's Trans-Nzoia to grow maize in 1921, was fairly typical in this regard. Pitman had acquainted himself with the 'the Bagungu' when some of them accompanied him on his first tour of the reserve in 1926. He believed these people were clearly trespassing and feared the hitherto limited repopulation of Bugungu Exempted Area was only 'the thin end of the wedge and may lead to the demand for further reclamation in the Game Reserve'.[429] After the 1925 arrival of Governor William Gowers, another keen hunter-naturalist who was also an SPFE member, the government converted Sleeping Sickness Areas into game reserves in several locations in the south-west of the protectorate. Bugungu represented an anomaly.

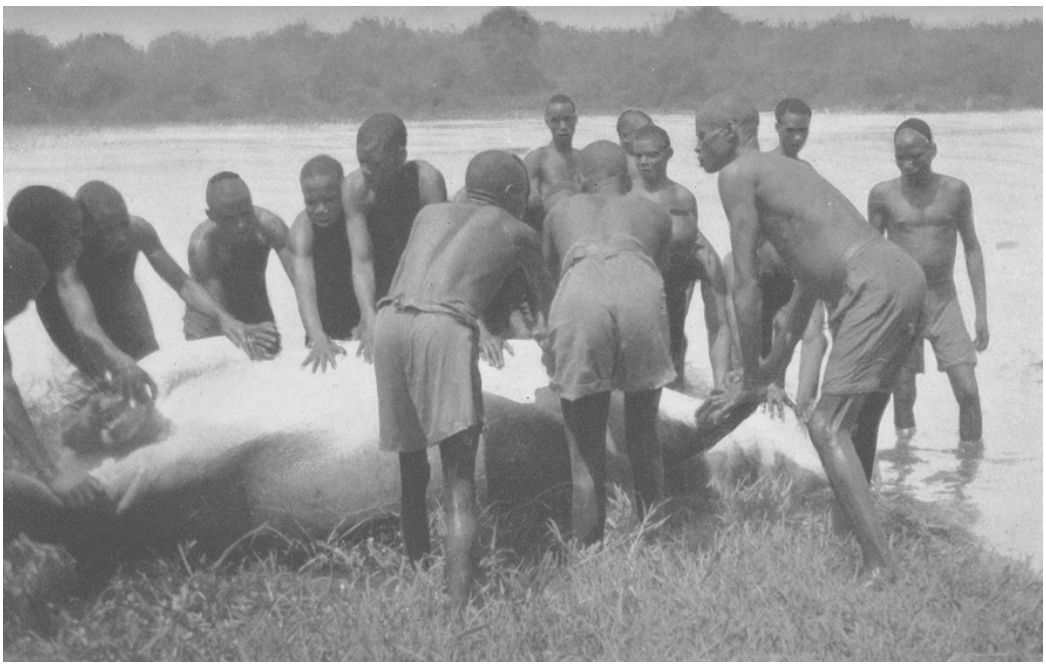

Figure 22: C.R.S. Pitman, 'Bangungu (*sic*) porters and a dead hippopotamus' (n.d. but c. 1926).[430]

[429] Game Warden Pitman to CS, 'Game Report', 7 May 1926, UNA, A46/2587.
[430] From C.R.S. Pitman, *A game warden among his charges* (London, 1931), facing p. 272.

While game preservationists were resistant to the idea of reclamation, administrators were not keen to embark on another episode of 'induced' resettlement.[431] A flurry of overwhelming force would involve great expense, which would be looked on with grave disfavour by Entebbe and London, especially as this costly and protracted business had already been undertaken in 1909. A second episode of coerced removal – violent or otherwise – so soon after the creation of the Exempted Area would jeopardise the increasingly stable and productive collaboration between African elites and European officials and unofficials that was developing in Bunyoro by the mid-1920s.[432] While an image of the Gungu as primitive and undisciplined persisted, those at the Exempted Area under Mukukuusa were at least staying in place.

In the early 1920s, European assessments of the ethno-civilisational standing and potential of Bunyoro as a whole were changing.[433] Bunyoro's peoples and their cultures generated greater European interest, respect and sympathy. Wartime service of a few Nyoro men as porters had burnished the reputation of Bunyoro as a whole.[434] Administrators and missionaries were staying longer in Bunyoro and touring more frequently.[435] The new generation of administrators asserted mastery of their domain and rights to membership of an élite administrative cadre by developing esoteric vernacular knowledges, including command of a language and ethnological insight. ADC Lancelot Harry Cuthbert Rayne, who spent most of his twenties in Bunyoro, had by his death in 1919 become 'the only Government

[431] To S. of S., 17 March 1924, UKNA, CO 536/130.
[432] F.H.B. Sandford, 'Bunyoro Past and Present', *Uganda Teachers' Journal* 3, no. 2 (1941), pp. 60-61.
[433] 'Personal record of chiefs and influential natives of Bugahya Saza', 1912-1920, HDA.
[434] 'Masindi Notes', *Uganda Herald,* 6 June 1919.
[435] Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 165-166.

official who could speak the language'.[436] Catholic missionaries like Omer Beaudoin, and protestants such as the CMS's Harry Bowers continued to contribute to this official rehabilitation [437] A new era had dawned in 1924 with the enthronement of Mukama Tito Winyi and with Hoima's restoration as the district's administrative capital in an effort to provide impetus to the economy of the Nyoro-Gahya heartlands of Bugahya.

In this context, inertia over the matter of Bugungu Exempted Area set in. The problem had been made even more intractable by scientific support for further reclamation. After a couple of years in which no fresh cases of sleeping sickness were identified, in 1927-1928 Carpenter began to argue that boundary of the Sleeping Sickness Area (as it was known from 1928) 'requires redefining as it includes much country that could now be safely opened for habitation'.[438] But the manpower required for such an undertaking was not forthcoming. In the late 1920s there were years when Carpenter did not visit Bugungu at all. The administration did not meet his requests for the administration to recruit a Sleeping Sickness administrative supervisor for the Lake Albert area.[439]

Growing claims were made by exiles and returnees for further reclamation and the downsizing of the game reserve. Pitman's concerns in this regard had proved well founded. According to one count of the Exempted Area in 1928, 1285 people – only about a third of those who had been at Bagungu Location – had now

[436] 'Masindi Notes', *Uganda Herald,* 29 August 1919.
[437] Omer Beaudoin, 'Bunyoro after twenty years of civilisation', *AMWF* 12, no.4 (1920), pp. 106-118; J.R.P. Postlethwaite, *I look back* (London, 1947), pp. 113-114.
[438] UP, *AMSR 1927* (Entebbe, 1928), p. 72.
[439] 'Minutes of a conference held in office of the Chief Secretary on the 26th April, 1924', UKNA, CO 536/132; G.D.H. Carpenter to E.B. Poulton[?], 13 March 1927, ONHMA, Carpenter Papers.

returned to Bugungu.[440] Some preferred life above the escarpment; this was perhaps especially the case among the younger generation, who knew no other world, and women who performed most of the agricultural labour. But many men and women who had spent an earlier part of their life in Bugungu desperately wanted to return, once other parts of Bugungu were reopened for settlement. Many returnees knew that individual and collective well-being in this hostile environment required strength in numbers. [441]

Inertia was perpetuated by new sources of uncertainty. A proposed dam on the Albert Nile threatened to raise the level of the lake by several metres, causing massive disruption and upheaval to settlements. The project originated in the mid-1920s from within the Egyptian government whose studies of the Upper Nile Basin had suggested Pakwach as a likely location.[442] Official interest in the area's petroleum potential had also revived under Governor Gowers. The earlier oil rush had ultimately petered out as capital for such a risky venture proved difficult to attract in the early 1920s. But the economic climate had changed, and government geologists had identified further oil seeps in the Northern Albertine Rift, including one on the Victoria Nile below Murchison Falls.[443] The government sought and found a highly capitalised, proven firm willing to consider this unproven oil frontier. Negotiations began in 1926 with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's wholly-owned subsidiary, the D'Arcy Exploration Corporation, and were to

[440] UP, *AMSR* 1928 (Entebbe, 1929), p. 78.
[441] For a similar phenomenon among the Ssese people in Buganda, see Soff, 'A history', p. 194.
[442] W.C. Bottomley to the Under S. of S. Foreign Office, 1 April 1926, UKNA, CO 536/141/2.
[443] UP, *Report of the Geological Survey Department For the Year ended 31st December 1924* (Entebbe, 1925), p. 8.

continue into 1931, when international oil prices plummeted.[444] But a company geologist who had visited Bugungu in 1928 believed that the lowlands held promise for oil-bearing geological structures.[445] Gowers hoped that private investment would be forthcoming if the Colonial Development Fund covered the initial costs of the 'proving the potential oil-field'.[446]

Figure 23: Untitled map showing oil concessions (1926).[447]

444 W.F. Gowers, 'Notes on interview with Mr. C.F. de Ganahl', 24 June 1929, UNA, C/BOX 15/C.1399; Perryman to S. of S., 12 March 1930, BPA, ARC44147; Gowers to Rhodes, 21 August 1929, RHL, Mss.Afr.s.1150(2).
445 B.K.N. Wyllie, 'Second report on investigations in Lake Albert Basin Uganda', 21 November 1928, BPA, ARC130309; B.K.N. Wyllie, 'More adventures in Africa', *The NAFT A.P.O.C. Magazine* 6, no. 4 (1930), pp. 8-13 (pp. 12-13).
446 Gowers to S. of S., 6 March 1930, UKNA, CO 536/161/3.
447 Enclosure to Acting Governor E.B. Jarvis to S. of S., 26 July 1926, UKNA, CO 536/140.

This impasse over the Exempted Area was becoming increasingly untenable on the ground from the late 1920s. The Game Department maintained a policy of withholding protection from those who were audacious enough to live in places where protection was most required: remote places where elephants were plentiful – especially within or near game reserves. Demonstrating total ignorance of the pre-1909 history of Bugungu, Pitman averred that 'in instances where the native population has encroached or has been settled on traditional elephant grazing grounds, little protection can be afforded'.[448] In effect, this passivity on the part of the Game Department served as a form of collective punishment for those who lived where the colonial state would rather they did not. Human-wildlife conflict had intensified owing to the 1926 Game Ordinance's restrictions on African hunting. Elsewhere in the protectorate, to the SPFE's dismay, thousands of elephants per year were being shot by the Game Department in protection of African settlements.[449] But in Bugungu local complaints about being 'constantly raided by elephants' had little effect, despite the fact that the elephant population had 'increased enormously'. Very occasional 'special tours' by Game Department personnel were all this remote settlement received. No hunting was permitted in the game reserve either with or without a licence.[450]

But conservationists soon found a way to resist downsizing the game reserve, and to threaten the very limited extant African settlement in the form of the Bugungu Exempted Area. The game reserve began to pay for itself, by attracting visitors to the spectacular Murchison Falls and its surroundings. This site had been a key

[448] UP, *ARGD 1925* (Entebbe, 1926), p. 13.
[449] Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 199-203.
[450] Windsor and Chalmers, *Sport*, pp. 68-69; UP, *ARGD 1928* (Entebbe, 1929), p. 11; UP, *ARGD 1929* (Entebbe, 1930), p. 30.

element in the imperial iconography of Uganda for almost 65 years – ever since Baker's proto-colonial acts of inscription. But for several decades, none of those who followed Baker were preoccupied by its preservation and protection. On the contrary, many were convinced that the falls should be exploited for hydro-electric power as a basis for local industry, and possibly a railway line running from the south of the protectorate to either Ndandamire, Pajao, or Butiaba.[451] But industrial plans had not materialised, and the ways in which certain influential Europeans perceived this landscape had transformed over two decades during which barely anybody had seen it. Between the wars was a time of great anxiety about the self-destructive tendencies of industrial capitalist society, and the coming of age of ecology – a science enthralled by the idea of pristine ecosystems.[452] The Victoria Nile up to Murchison Falls represented, in Pitman's eyes, 'one of the finest spectacles of wild unspoilt Africa which yet remains.'[453] A wider social constituency for wildlife preservation was developing alongside new forms of consumption associated with glamour and status.

The authorities developed the idea of selling steamboat trips to East Africa's white populations and to a growing, well-heeled class of international tourists – particularly Americans – seeking to shoot wildlife with a camera rather than rifle. Trips would be run by Kenya and Uganda Railways & Harbours (KUR&H), the inter-governmental corporation which had taken over the running of transportation services along the lake and the Masindi-Butiaba road earlier in the

[451] Winston Churchill, *My African Journey* (London, 1908), pp. 166-167; A.G. Stevenson, 'Report on Proposed Railway routes across Unyoro', 1908, UKNA, CO 536/19.
[452] Corey Ross, 'Tropical'.
[453] UP, *ARGD 1929* (Entebbe, 1930), p. 7.

1920s.[454] The only channel by which river steamers could enter the Victoria Nile through the papyrus from Lake Albert was reopened in 1928. In order to prevent 'promiscuous shooting on the part of sightseers' the existing game reserve was extended north across the river and into Gulu District Sleeping Sickness Area for a distance of ten to fifteen miles, creating an almost quadrilateral-shaped 'Bunyoro and Gulu Game Reserve'.[455] In 1929 KUR&H began running fortnightly passenger trips from Butiaba to Pajao as tourists started to arrive.[456] Scheduled trips ran around the first few months of the year when more elephants frequented the riverbanks. Much of the initial marketing buzz had been generated by the royal safari of the dashing Prince of Wales and his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, in October 1928. This promotional work was continued by Hollywood film production companies who between 1928 and 1930 used Murchison Falls and the surrounding area as a location.[457]

Preserving wild Africa: Bugungu and the national park threat, 1930-1934

The matter came to a head in the early 1930s. Tourism at this stage represented an extremely marginal, unproven value to the protectorate's economy. It nevertheless boosted the Bunyoro-Gulu Game Reserve's profile at the time when the national parks movement was taking off in the colonial metropoles. The Colonial Office was facing increasing external pressure for game reserves to be

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454 'The Murchison Falls', *Uganda Herald*, 8 March 1929; KUR&H, *Special fortnightly limited excursions by steamer from Butiaba to the Murchison Falls* (Nairobi, 1929).
455 UP, *ARGD 1928* (Entebbe, 1929), p. 8.
456 For example, see Neville Chamberlain to Ida Chamberlain, 26 January 1930, BUA, NC/18/1.
457 For example, *Congorilla* (1932) and *Trader Horn* (1931).

converted into national parks. Game reserves could be created, altered or abolished by a colonial governor, by 'simply' gaining the approval of the Secretary of State for Colonies; any of these actions in relation to national parks, by contrast, required Acts of Parliament. The SPFE's aristocratic core spearheaded the parks movement in British Africa. At the helm from 1926, stood the fifth Earl of Onslow, a politically active, and imperially connected Conservative member of the peerage. His zeal reflected aristocratic anxieties over the survival of their privilege in the changing British political landscape as much as it did the physical landscapes of empire.[458] The SPFE had found even more powerful allies in the British Museum, the Zoological Society of London and the Prince of Wales, who had joined as a patron in April 1929; the Joint East African Board, a business pressure group representing and connecting metropolitan and settler interests; and conservationists from Belgium. Ostensibly in an effort to protect the rare mountain gorilla, the Belgian monarch, Albert, had established Africa's first national park in Congo (and named it after himself).

The Belgian government was interested in British Uganda's wildlife because the vast Albert National Park abutted much of the protectorate's south-west. The alliance with the SPFE had been assured when the latter's President, Lord Onslow, and Vice-President, Viscount Grey of Gallodon, had been appointed by the Belgians to the Albert National Park's Administrative Commission. The Belgian conservationists and the SPFE sought similar protections for the mountain gorilla on the Uganda side of the inter-territorial boundary under a similarly patrician management arrangement. It was in part to mollify the

[458] Roderick Neumann, 'Dukes, earls, and ersatz Edens: aristocratic nature preservationists in colonial Africa', *Environment and Planning D* 14 (1996), pp. 79-98.

Belgians that Governor Gowers had gazetted various protected areas adjacent to the Congo. He had declared a game reserve at Lake George in 1925, and another on Lake Edward in 1930, when he had also declared a 'sanctuary' specifically to protect the gorilla at Uganda's mountainous south-westernmost extreme.

But the feature of parks that made them so appealing to the SPFE made them rather less so to the colonial bureaucracy. The SPFE considered national parks essential to the 'perpetual preservation of fauna', owing to the 'permanency and inviolability' of their legal status. Parks were therefore insulated from the very political or economic expediency that often defined colonial rule. The Colonial Office received proposals for the creation of parks in East Africa, in particular, in 1928.[459] But under the Labour Government, the Secretary of State for the Colonies Lord Passfield, in November 1929 in the House of Lords stated his belief that it was 'undesirable' that the governments of East Africa 'should tie their hands irrevocably', he argued. 'We cannot foresee the future sufficiently yet'.[460]

The SPFE launched a thinly veiled public relations assault on the Colonial Office and British Africa's colonial governments in 1930. As a result of an SPFE deputation to Lord Passfield in March 1930, the organisation was authorised to commission naturalist and former colonial medical officer, Richard Hingston, to visit five British colonies in East and Central Africa, ostensibly to examine the status of wildlife and the potential for national parks. Hingston's mission was something of a charade as the status of wildlife preservation in these colonies was well known to the SPFE through its members. The real object of his 'investigation'

[459] 'General Meeting, 15 October 1928', *JSPFE* 9 (1928) pp. 5–12 (9).
[460] HL Deb 21 November 1929 vol 75 cc625-50.
(644-645) <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/lords/1929/nov/21/preservation-of-wild-fauna>.

was to persuade white government officers and 'representatives of public opinion' among the settler community in the colonies, and to generate publicity for the movement at home.[461]

For several years the SPFE and its allies had fixated on the gorilla area in the south-western mountains; now Hingston's visit brought the question of Bunyoro-Gulu Game Reserve's future to the fore for the first time.[462] Unlike the gorilla area, Bunyoro-Gulu was earmarked unequivocally for tourism development, akin to Kruger National Park, established in 1926. Certain officials and settlers interviewed by Hingston in Kampala and Entebbe in August 1930 were broadly supportive of this game reserve's conversion. One of the protectorate's main settler-oriented newspapers, whose proprietor was canvassed by Hingston, offered the opinion that 'the public' would 'welcome' such a development. 'The pressure of Western Civilisation is a steady force making itself felt', the *Herald* warned, 'the day cannot be far distant when this Protectorate as a whole will be denuded of its wilder life'.[463] Similarly, Game Ranger Roy J.D. 'Samaki' Salmon, deputising as Game Warden in Pitman's absence, was reported to be 'quite clear on the necessity for a National Park', according to Hingston's own unpublished interview notes. In Salmon's opinion, currently the area was 'singularly useless' from an economic perspective.[464]

[461] R. W. G. Hingston, 'Proposed British National Parks for Africa', *The Geographical Journal* 77, no. 5 (1931), pp. 401-422 (p. 416); R.W.G. Hingston, 'The Only Way of Saving African Fauna', *Illustrated London News*, 13 December 1930.
[462] Secretary SPFE to Under S. of S., 22 April 1929, UKNA, CO 536/152/1.
[463] 'Wild Animal Sanctuary and National Park', *Uganda Herald*, 15 August 1930.
[464] Hingston notes from interview with Captain R. Salmon, 6 August 1930, TCDA, MS 10476.

Drawing heavily on these and other comments by Salmon, Hingston's report delivered to the Colonial Office in early 1931 identified Bunyoro-Gulu Game Reserve as 'the most suitable area in Uganda for a national park'. It met Hingston's requirements because it contained a variety of wildlife and terrain, contained a 'remarkable' centrepiece, and was accessible owing to its location near both the Nile route, and a proposed possible railway. No other economic uses were conceivable, he asserted, owing to the absence of either any indications of 'anything of mineral value', and or any potential in terms of cultivation. One of Bunyoro-Gulu's further merits, from Hingston's perspective, was its relative lack of inhabitants; his report relayed Salmon's assertion that the game reserve contained just a 'small fishing community'.[465]

Hingston did not offer any specific recommendations for the future of the Bugungu settlement; however, he made an indirect, threateningly ambiguous reference. In his opinion, certain peoples – such as the Twa hunter-gatherers in the Albert National Park and the Maasai pastoralists in Tanganyika's Serengeti at this time – exhibited the picturesque 'primitive' behaviour and livelihoods that lent charm to the primal environment. But it was unclear where the people of Bugungu fitted in these hierarchies of civilisation. At the very least, it appeared Hingston was arguing that the Exempted Area become permanently circumscribed and subject to an independent national park organisation he slated for creation. But there appeared to be even greater trouble ahead if Bugungu's inhabitants were deemed to be something other than a purely '*fishing* community' (emphasis added). 'If natives are allowed to cultivate inside a park there are certain

[465] Hingston, 'Proposed', p. 408-409.

to be continual complaints', Hingston reasoned. 'The only real solution is to arrange for their removal to suitable land outside park limits'.[466]

Within the Uganda administrative service Hingston's report had in reality been rather counterproductive. At a variance with the situation prevailing in Kenya and Tanganyika, most senior officials in Uganda in fact vociferously opposed his proposals. Even Pitman, a member of the SPFE, objected to the parks idea, resenting the 'unwarranted interference' of this metropolitan dilettante's one-size-fits-all prescription.[467] Officials knew that Uganda's wildlife – particular elephants – was in no way threatened. Recreational parks akin to South Africa's Kruger were inappropriate in the particular colonial context of Uganda, whose small European population took 'no interest in wild game preservation'.[468] Governor Gowers had for some time encouraged the proposal for the gorilla park, on the grounds that the inaccessible mountainous country was 'of no conceivable economic value'. But he considered Bunyoro-Gulu at this stage 'quite unsuitable' for a national park.[469]

Gowers' official response to Hingston in mid-May 1931 in certain respects reflected other developments regarding Bunyoro. The public politics of territorial dispossession had been intensifying for a few years owing in no small part to the efforts of upland educated elites of the 'Young Banyoro Association'.[470] In

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[466] Hingston, 'Proposed', p. 408-409.
[467] C R S Pitman, Uganda Game Warden, to Secretary, SPFE, 15 November 1930, FPSA, Af/Xl/NP), quoted in Roderick P Neumann, 'Dukes, Earls, and Ersatz Edens: Aristocratic Nature Preservationists in Colonial Africa', *Environment and Planning D* 14, no. 1 (1996), pp. 79-98 (p. 88). The FPS archive cannot be traced.
[468] Hingston, notes from interview with Perryman, 4 August 1930, TCDA, MS 10476.
[469] W.F. Gowers to A.C.C. Parkinson, 16 October 1930, RHL, MSS.Afr.s.1150(3).
[470] Balamu J. Mukasa, 'The Bunyoro Land Question', 13 August 1929, CMSA, Unofficial papers, Acc. 84/F5; Governor to S. of S. for the colonies, 16 July 1929, UKNA, CO 536/156/10; Young Munyoro, Letter to the editor, *Uganda Herald*, 17 March 1931; Cooper to Bowers, 29 May 1931, CMSA, G3/A7/L5.

addition, ahead of appearing as one of Uganda's three delegates before a Joint Parliamentary Commission on closer union in East Africa,[471] one young Nyoro activist – Ruyonga's grandson, Kosia Labwoni – had publicised the Lost Counties dispute through an official memorandum.[472] Miti's successor as Bujenje county chief, Kosiya Labwoni, was a long-term mentee of the CMS's Bowers, who had appointed him as one of the co-editors of a Runyoro periodical printed in Masindi titled *Kanisa mu Bunyoro* (or 'Bunyoro Church Magazine').[473]

Gowers systematically scrutinised SPFE's contentions regarding Bunyoro-Gulu. 'I cannot agree that the area offers no possibility of human settlement', he claimed, citing the existence of a 'fairly large population' only twenty years earlier. The people 'will undoubtedly require room for expansion in the course of time', he advised. Gowers also urged the Colonial Office to recognise the potential offered by research into the eradication of the tsetse fly, a threat which in his view was already diminishing. Gowers also provided other grounds to dispute Hingston's claims about the area's lack of economic potential. With regards to minerals, the area had 'by no means been exhaustively prospected', he argued. In addition, the area's accessibility was, if anything, 'a strong argument against' a 'hasty decision' for its appropriation for game preservation; furthermore, proposals for a dam on the upper Albert Nile, and the railway on the Gulu side could have 'far-reaching effects' on Bunyoro-Gulu reserve's 'economic importance. [474]

But Gowers had not entirely dismissed the SPFE's overtures. They proposals were simply 'premature' – not entirely out of place. A few months later, to the

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[471] 'Bunyoro memorandum on Closer Union', *Uganda Herald*, 10 April 1931.
[472] A young Munyoro, 'Letter to the editor', *Uganda Herald*, 17 March 1931;
[473] H. Bowers, Annual Letter, 31 August 1931, CMS, G3/AL/1917-1934.
[474] Gowers to S. of S., 16 May 1931, UKNA, CO 822/34/11.

frustration of Passfield's Conservative Party successor in the Colonial Office, Sir Phillip Cunliffe-Lister, Gowers' sanguine statements on the prospects of a national park for the gorilla area had been aired in public.[475] Those concerned by the plight of Bugungu had not been given great cause for optimism. Gowers had reassured the Colonial Office and SPFE that neither he nor his successors would 'lightly recommend the abolition of the Reserve or the reduction of its area'.[476] Signs that the metropole's stance on national parks was softening became apparent amid the political and financial crisis that consumed the UK in 1931. Britain's official delegates to the International Congress for the Protection of Nature, held in Paris in June 1931, had been the SPFE's Onslow and Charles Hobley, who conveyed the government's proposal for a major international conference on wildlife preservation. Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald who infamously led the UK's first National Government from August 1931, became an honorary member of the SPFE the next year.[477]

The national park threat galvanised the constellation of officials who found themselves in Bunyoro by this time. The spiralling losses of cotton, ground-nuts, cassava and human lives to marauding elephants in Bugungu had already become a grave source of concern to Masindi-based PC for Northern Province, Cambridge-educated administrative veteran, John Gilbert Rubie who had spent almost two decades among less centralised societies in Northern Province, and the new DC E. Dauncey-Tongue, who arrived in post in October 1931.[478] Rubie was at

[475] 'Wild life of Empire', *The Times*, 25 September 1931.
[476] Gowers to S. of S., 16 May 1931, UKNA, CO 822/34/11.
[477] 'Report of the Annual General Meeting', *JSPFE* 16, no. 8 (1932), p. 3.
[478] J. G. Rubie (PCNP), 'Report on the Northern Province for the year ended 31st December 1930', 9 March 1931, UNA, SecTop/BOX 5/U/U.00213; 12/12/1931, BTB2, HDA; 'Masindi news', *Uganda Herald,* 24 June 1932.

the time ushering in a new chapter in the district's history. He had led a committee of enquiry into land matters in Bunyoro in August 1931. Though the committee was to reject the demands of the Mukama and his chiefs for freehold estates akin to those their counterparts in Buganda had long enjoyed, Rubie's experience of these men persuaded him that Bunyoro's loyalty deserved to be rewarded, given its status and 'past misfortunes'.[479] Discussions began for a 'Bunyoro Agreement' to define the respective rights and obligations of the Protectorate and Bunyoro Native Government.

With the departure of Gowers in April 1932, an opening presented itself in regard to Bugungu. Rubie tested the positions of the Acting Governor Major Eustace L. Scott and Acting Chief Secretary Lancelot E. Knollys, both veterans of Uganda service. The opening gambit in the official resistance to the park proposal was made in August 1932. Dauncey-Tongue with the support of the Bunyoro Game Ranger Jock Jardine convinced Rubie to present the Chief Secretary with a proposal. These officials recommended an extension of the Bugungu Exempted Area to the south and south-west, between the Waiga River and Butiaba, to permit the return of more of the exiles, who had been excised from the Game Reserve 'to enable effective elephant control to be exercised therein'.[480] But this initiative was to be one of the final official acts in the protectorate by both Rubie, who retired on health grounds in September, and by Jardine, whose post was abolished in August owing to cutbacks. The initial reception of this proposal in Entebbe did not augur well. Knollys warned Rubie that the prospects for such an alteration receiving

[479] UP, *Enquiry into Land Tenure and the Kibanja system in Bunyoro* (Entebbe, 1931), p. 35.
[480] PCNP J.G. Rubie to Ag. CS Lancelot Erskine Knollys, 30 August 1932, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/2.

authorisation from London were not good 'in view of the proposal that this reserve should be retained in perpetuity as a National Park'.[481]

The interests of the tourism industry were invoked by the Acting Game Warden Salmon to rebuff Rubie's proposal. Salmon claimed that if elephant control were to be exercised on behalf of the settled area, the KUR&H trip would 'lose lots of its attractions', because 'the greater animals' would 'suffer considerable disturbance'.[482] In these years, white-owned tourism businesses such as Drysdale's Auto Tours of Kampala and Biiso-based Lake Albert Hotel were capitalising on the KUR&H investments and multiplying their efforts to convince the government to invest in publicity for the protectorate. The proprietor of the former, K.J. Drysdale, sat on a publicity sub-committee within the Uganda Chamber of Commerce (UCC) by mid-1932.[483] He conveyed the Acting Governor Scott to Murchison Falls a few months later; and returned him to Entebbe 'full of enthusiasm for this eighth wonder of the world', the *Herald* reported.[484] The tourism industry was now increasingly promoted as serious commercial proposition, to which the game reserve in Bugungu was essential.[485]

[481] CS to PCNP, 11 October 1932, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I /7-8
[482] R. J. D. Salmon, Acting Game Warden to CS, 'Minute 5', 7 October 1932, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/3
[483] 'Publicity scheme for Uganda', *Uganda Herald*, 29 July 1932.
[484] 'Bunyoro notes', *Uganda Herald*, 7 October 1932.
[485] 'A trip to the Murchison Falls', *Uganda Herald*, 18 March 1932.

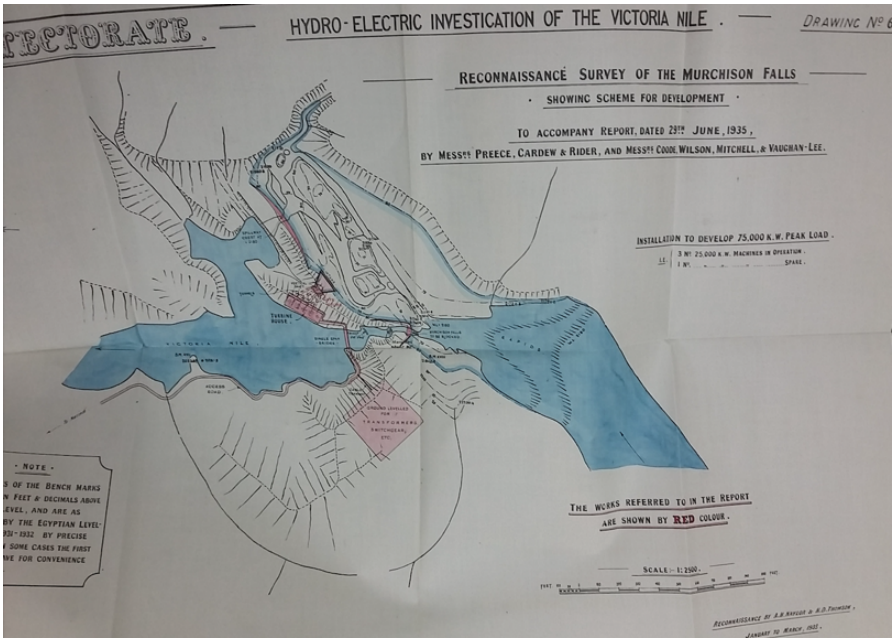

Figure 24: 'Hydro-electric investigation of the Victoria Nile' (1935).[486]

Rubie's proposal seems to have stalled somewhat after his departure, and the new governor Bernard Bourdillon's arrival, around the turn of 1933. But discussions were renewed between Rubie's replacement, Broderick Ashton-Warner, and the Bunyoro DC Dauncey-Tongue, who visited Bugungu together in June 1933.[487] Signs that Bourdillon might be convinced to push back against the conservationists were encouraging. His administration had assented to the preliminary examination of Murchison Falls' hydro-electric power potential, and was considering approaches by various firms seeking oil exploration licences.[488] Officials began to take a relaxed approach to sleeping sickness rules. By mid-1933 he had permitted at least one small fishing village to be officially gazetted within the boundaries of the Lake Edward Game Reserve in recognition of the value of

[486] Preece, Cardew & Rider, 'Hydro electric investigation of the Victoria Nile', 29 June 1935, UKNA, CO 536/184.
[487] 16/6/1933, BTB2, HDA.
[488] Preece, Cardew & Rider, 'Hydro electric investigation of the Victoria Nile', 29 June 1935, UKNA, CO 536/184; Bourdillon to S. of S., 24 April 1934, UKNA, CO 536/181/15.

economic fisheries.[489] European commercial developments on Lake Albert followed: in the second half of 1933 a British venture called Lake Albert Resources (LAR) Ltd obtained an exclusive fishing licence and established themselves on the lakeshore in Bugungu at Wankende.[490] LAR Ltd anticipated being able to dispose of large quantities of fish in the Belgian Congo on a regular basis owing to demand for rations for the considerable workforce at Kilo-Moto. The early 1930s saw an expansion of activity at the mines, responding to a dramatic increase in the annual average of the London market price at which Sokimo sold its gold. Investments were made in new mines, which were due to come into production in 1934. With assistance in recruitment from a colonial government that still held a majority stake, Sokimo began to rapidly expand Kilo-Moto's force of cheap unskilled labour.[491]

The matter of the Bugungu settlement had become even more urgent in 1933 for various reasons. In mid-October 1933 the inter-war amelioration in Anglo-Nyoro relations was to culminate in the signing of the Bunyoro Agreement. Territory and game preservation had emerged as a point of contention during negotiations.[492] British officials were to be forced to address these concerns by including a clause that the governor would give 'full consideration to the agricultural needs of the people', and would make no alteration to the boundaries of game reserves without giving 'full consideration' to the mukama's wishes.[493] A matter of weeks later, SPFE's efforts to pin the British government down on a commitment to National

[489] Bourdillon to Cunliffe-Lister, 28 June 1933, UKNA, CO 536/177/2.
[490] UP, *ARGD 1933* (Entebbe, 1934), pp. 62-63.
[491] UP, *ARGD 1934* (Entebbe, 1935), p. 67; Bakonzi, 'The gold mines', pp. 356-375.
[492] J.E.W. Flood, 18 September 1933, UKNA, CO 536/178/10; Bunyoro Native Government to Governor, 11 August 1933, UKNA, CO 536/178/10.
[493] Uganda, The Bunyoro Agreement, 1933 (Entebbe, 1933), p. 5.

Parks were to culminate in the Onslow-chaired International Conference for the Protection of the Fauna and Flora of Africa at the House of Lords, bringing together delegates from all of Africa's imperial overlords.[494]

In late September 1933, Ashton-Warner went further than his predecessor in a long and strongly worded memorandum to the Chief Secretary on the subject of Bugungu. 'I should view with the utmost concern any proposal having as its object the preservation in perpetuity [of a National Park] (...) to the exclusion of the claims of the indigenous population', he stated. In his view, only a game reserve of a far more limited extent 'in the vicinity of the Victoria Nile and Murchison Falls' would not risk 'prejudicing the future needs of the local'. Reminding the Secretariat that people had been 'forcibly' removed, he emphasised that 'the reason for their eviction no longer exists', and claimed that those who had already resettled in the Bugungu Exempted Area were 'cramped'. In the long-term, in line with likely increases in the population he envisaged the people being permitted to extend their settlements east of the track, and to 'take up such country as they can occupy effectively'. But in the short-term, in the name of maintaining surveillance and control, he recommended excising the current settlement area from both the Sleeping Sickness Area and game reserve, while extending the cultivated area east of the Bukumi-Ndandamire track, and, in accordance with his predecessor's recommendations, extending the settlement zone southwards from the Waiga River to the Sonso River. These measures would enable the return of a few

[494] 'Notes by the way', *Uganda Herald*, 20 September 1933.

thousand people, and the protection of their crops through shooting by elephant control game rangers and hunters on licences.[495]

Preserving wild Africans: scales of justice and civilisation in Bugungu, c. 1930-1935

Economic arguments of eco-tourist capital and their collaborators in the Game Department were met with those of Bunyoro-based administrators concerning peasant-focused lacustrine and agrarian development. Administrators came to appreciate Bugungu owing to direct experience, made possible by slightly better access than had previously been the case. In order to ease administration and the transport of cash crops, in the late 1920s the government had begun to upgrade and extend the rudimentary network of roads established in the early colonial period to connect the district's core with many of its peripheries.[496] Below the escarpment a rough path through the bush to the Bugungu Exempted Area was improved, especially from 1933.

European observers, demonstrating the same concern for African production that had spurred the overhaul of game policy, were increasingly aware of the relative wealthiness and healthiness of Bugungu by the early 1930s. The pattern of long-distance labour migration by young men in pursuit of wages, common among the populace above the escarpment, never obtained in Bugungu. In 1928, when elsewhere in Bunyoro the difficulty of acquiring livestock and cash for bridewealth payments was proving an obstacle to marriage, missionaries noted

[495] B. Ashton Warner PCNP to CS, 27 September 1933, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/9.
[496] Dunbar, *A history*, pp. 149-150, 181, 200-201.

that 'each self-respecting Mugungu has at least two women'.[497] Livestock numbers in Bugungu bounced back after being devasted by an outbreak of rinderpest (caused by buffalo in the reserve) and a bad batch of vaccines.[498] Already by the end of 1931 there were about 550 cattle (along with 4,400 goats and 1,700 sheep).[499] Partly the result of purchases from Lango District, partly down to natural increase,[500] the number of cattle had increased from about 670 in early 1933 to roughly 1,130 in late 1934.[501] Bugungu was deemed to be a healthy place for cattle by Bunyoro's standards; even the mukama kept a herd there.[502]

Officials wrote admiringly about the 'industrious' ways of Bugungu's inhabitants.[503] There were two main sources of income. Within a British administration taking active steps to increase African agrarian production in order to address the collapse of export prices, certain figures now deemed Bugungu suitable for 'economic development' – 'excellent' for the cultivation of cotton.[504] But Bugungu's wealth derived increasingly from fishing for both local consumption and trading for foodstuffs and other goods.[505] The Uganda authorities commissioned a brief survey of Lake Albert in 1928 by a British

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[497] Masindi Mission Diary, 13 March 1928, A.G.M.Afr., D.OR.168.
[498] Doyle, *Crisis*, pp. 204-205; B. Ashton-Warner, 'Northern Province Annual Report for the year ended the 31st December 1929', 22 March 1930, UNA, SecTop/BOX5/U/U.00213; Game Warden (Pitman) to Chief Secretary, 12 February 1929, UNA, SecTop/BOX 7/H/H.024-02; UP, *ARGD 1928* (Entebbe, 1929), p. 39.
[499] 12/12/1931, BTB2, HDA.
[500] 18/5/1935 & 21/1/1936, BTB2, HDA.
[501] 14/6/1933, BTB2, HDA.
[502] 16/9/1935, BTB2, HDA.
[503] 23/4/1932 & 16/6/1933, BTB2, HDA
[504] B. Ashton Warner PCNP to CS, 27 September 1933, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/9.
[505] Rubie, 'Report on the Northern Province for the period January 1st to June 30th 1930', 29 August 1930, UNA, SecTop/Box 5/U/U.00213

ecologist. He stayed briefly in Bugungu in April of that year.[506] New technologies were being adopted, particularly beach seine nets (or drag nets) known locally as *makokota* (sg. *kokota*), for which the Bugungu shoreline was better suited than most.[507] This 'considerable' African industry deserved 'every encouragement'.[508] Fish were caught using basket traps and fences, as well as hooks made from nails and other metals. Attracted by growing opportunities, the first traders from South Asia and Somaliland blazed a trail into Bugungu from about 1933.[509]

But it was not industriousness alone that appealed to men like Ashton Warner and Dauncey Tongue. The period was characterised by official concerns regarding the speed of social change and the problem of the'detribalized native', 'with the consequent growth of indiscipline'. Dauncey Tongue had written about these problems in a psychology journal, bemoaning the 'imposition of a twentieth-century civilisation of a highly individualistic type upon an eighth or ninth-century communal organization of society'. The missions were 'the most potent influences in the destruction of communal life'; the schools produced 'a discontented intelligentsia of no practical value'; and the 'profitable crops' and the desire for new 'luxuries' undermined the 'old communal obligations'.[510] The Gungu community in Bugungu – the 'Ultima Thule of the south' – held a

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[506] 'Wealth of the lakes', *Uganda Herald*, 4 October 1933. A British man by the name of Hancock, who was running a small operation across the water in Panyimur in 1928. E.B. Worthington diary, 30 March and 6 April 1928, LSA, EBW/J/1/2; and E. B. Worthington, A *Report on the Fishing Survey of Lakes Albert and Kioga* (London, 1929), p. 14.
[507] 12.12.31 & 9/2/1932, BTB2, HDA; UP, *ARGD 1930* (Entebbe, 1931), p. 22.
[508] B. Ashton-Warner, 'Half Yearly report on the Northern Province for the period January 1st to June 30th 1930', 29 August 1930, UNA, SecTop/BOX 5/U/U.00213.
[509] 15/6/33, BTB2. Including Rajaballi Abdulalli of the Dawoodi Bohra Muslim Community, and Mohamedalli Essaji, a man from British Somaliland called Shah (Sher) Mohamed.
[510] E. Dauncey Tongue, 'The contact of races in Uganda', *British Journal of Psychology* 25, no. 3 (1935), pp. 353-364 (362-3).

particular attraction for such administrators.[511] Chapels and schools had only been established by the Catholics at Ndandamire and by the Anglican lay readers at Kisansya and Kisiabi from the late 1920s, and had yet to generate social prestige.[512] The impact of cash-cropping was still relatively light. The backing Bugungu received from certain quarters was also a reflection of the special place it came to hold for a time in the imaginations of a few influential officials. Putative Gungu primitivism had legitimised both the expulsion from Bugungu in 1909, and the relocation to a game reserve in 1922, now it made the people of Bugungu a compelling cause for colonial administrators.

A certain boorish, wildness in relation to authority also proved to be edifying for colonial officials. The disputatiousness and masculine energy that were part of external and self-images of the Gungu carried less perjorative valences in this era. 'Bagungu are an interesting, cheerful, industrious, argumentative people!', exclaimed one quite enthusiastic administrator.[513] 'I can quite imagine that their own Rukurato is a good old shouting match' where 'the one with the brass lungs gets the ear of the court, as in other primitive communities in Uganda several years ago', commented another.[514] Administrators believed that Africans elsewhere in Bunyoro were struggling to shake off the supposed condition of *amaani gaha* – meaning literally 'no strength'. No similar lack of vitality or virility was identified in Bugungu, by contrast.[515]

[511] Windsor and Chalmers, *Sport*, pp. 68-69.
[512] Diaire de n.d. du sacre cœur, 13 March 1928, A.G.M.Afr., D.OR.168.
[513] 16/9/1935, BTB2, HDA.
[514] 19/12/1937, BTB2, HDA.
[515] 15/6/33, BTB2, HDA.

Ideas of ethnic difference and civilisational hierarchy were frequently invoked by Europeans to explain this perceived propensity. In support of further reclamation and degazettement in Bugungu, Ashton-Warner had explained that the return of 1922 had been required because they were 'not Banyoro'. His forbears had permitted return 'in deference to the demands of the people', he had told Entebbe, as the exiles had 'never settled happily' in Kitana, for it meant living 'amongst people and in surroundings which are totally foreign to them'. Bugungu was where they belonged because the Gungu were primarily 'lake-shore dwellers and fisherman'.[516] Europeans interpreted this as a consequence of their connections with 'the far more primitive' 'Nilotic areas'. In contrast to the 'subservient Bantu', 'the absence of any tradition of loyalty to a supreme ruler render the Nilotic anything but (...) averse from voicing discontent'.[517] Such ideas were shared by a CMS missionary, who posited that the Gungu 'were a rather different type from the Banyoro proper' because of 'a mixture of Nilotic blood'.[518]

Their alterity and wildness needed to be marked and checked, however. The limits were imposed through collectivising violence by the Bugungu sub-county chief Mukukuusa. This coercive, punitive force was itself to some degree limited by positions of him and his sub-chiefs as neighbours and in some cases kinsmen of the local population. But the 'harsh' and 'certainly heavy' nature of his court sentences was widely recognised; it was calibrated for the wild Gungu. It was deemed by himself and British officials to be 'suited to this somewhat unusual area', which was 'sometimes truculent' by comparison with the inhabitants of the

[516] Ashton Warner to Chief Secretary, 27 September 1933, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/9.
[517] Dauncey Tongue, 'The contact', pp. 358-359.
[518] W.G.S. Duckworth, 'A week-end safari', *UCR* 34 (1934), pp. 42-44.

rest of the district. The colonial authorities believed that Mukukuusa 'commands respect', and enjoys 'exceptional control' of this 'primitive' people because 'he deals heavily with them'.[519] Dauncey Tongue regretted that 'communal punishment' had been 'practically abolished' when for many offences 'it would be entirely in keeping with native ideas, as it was with our own in Europe for many centuries. But the community and its position in the hierarchy of civilisation continued to be inscribed through individual punishments – often through the 'effective and expeditious' means of corporal punishment.[520]

That high-handed approach spoke of the way Mukukuusa saw the Gungu, and saw himself in relation to them. He was a *munyoro* in the oldest, political sense of the term: he held authority derived from the Nyoro state in the form of his chiefship.[521] But Mukukuusa was also seen as one of the men from Bugungu who 'tried to be like the Bagahya'.[522] Driven by the internalisation of the plateau's prejudices, and the pursuit of opportunities, he had sought cultural assimilation. Remembered locally as a most ostentatious exponent of the Runyoro, Mukukuusa was teased by one district administrator for his tendency to read ostentatiously in this language from a notebook 'at great length' in meetings.[523] In a putative scale of civilisation, Mukukuusa positioned his Cwa patrilineage, the 'Bacwaa Banyabyaara', as distinct and elevated from the Gungu. Mukukuusa encouraged the rather spurious notion that this patrilineage represented the 'traditional'

[519] 19.2.33, 15.6.33, 6/1133, 23/11/34,22.5.35, 23.1.36, 31.5.36, 18/12/37, BTB2, HDA.
[520] Dauncey Tongue, 'The contact', pp. 359-360.
[521] At some point he was also anointed by the mukama as a member of the Nyoro honorific order of the *Bajwara Kondo*, entailing substantial onerous obligations but increasingly few rights DC Bunyoro to PCWP, 8 October 1953, HDA, C.NAF.12.
[522] Int. Gungu 7a.
[523] Ints. Gungu 3a1, 3b1, 3c1; 19.12.37, BTB2, HDA.

ruling dynasty of Bugungu.[524] This idea met little official scrutiny. 'As one touring official put it, Mukukuusa was 'certainly suitable – being the hereditary chief'. 'The Bagungu', he added, 'are ruled by a chief chosen from one family'.[525] Increasingly comforting themselves in ideas of tradition and heredity in this period, the British were quite taken by what they viewed as a curious, spatially circumscribed ethnic institution, sub-ordinate to the Nyoro bukama.

Wilderness saved: reincorporation and dehumanisation, 1934-1938

The full realisation of even Ashton Warner's short-term ambitions for the protection and advancement of Bunyoro's 'most virile portion' were precluded by an obstructive Game Warden. Pitman seems to have believed that forced depopulation of the Exempted Area was the best solution to human-wildlife conflict in the area. He remained circumspect in regard to Bugungu, but in regards to a similar case in different colony he spoke more frankly about settlements within the reserve as 'absurd' and 'astonishing', and ventured that removal would involve but 'little hardship'.[526] The Game Warden reluctantly assented to the Bugungu settlement's slight extension eastward, and - though refusing to afford protection from game if people chose to settle in this area - between the rivers Waiga and Waisoke. Pitman would agree to the excision of both the new and old

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[524] A number of references made to the *Munyabyaara* as the special title of the Kabaleega-era Bugungu chief do survive from the early colonial period. For example, see 'Bunyoro', *Ebifa mu Buganda,* February 1917. The Bacwaa Banyabyaara secured influential assistance in projecting this novel institution back into the indistinct, now-distant past. For example, see John Nyakatura, *Abakama ba Bunyoro Kitara* (St. Justin, Quebec, 1947), pp. 159-160.
[525] 2/1934 and 31/12/1940, BTB2, HDA.
[526] C.R.S. Pitman, *A Report on a Faunal Survey of Northern Rhodesia* (Livingstone, 1934), pp. 138-139.

reclaimed areas from the game reserve, but 'emphatically' not the south bank of the Victoria Nile from Ndandamire to approximately one third of the distance up to Murchison Falls. As justification, he cited concerns regarding the threat to the 'spectacle of wildlife' for tourists which he had described in detail in his first book, published a couple of years earlier.[527]

Ashton-Warner was in March 1934 forced to accept the compromise offered by a determined Pitman.[528] Under pressure to arrange for resettlement during a window of time after crop harvesting season. Moreover, Bourdillon made increasingly clear his sympathies were not quite the same as Ashton-Warner's. Despite rhetoric concerning 'justice to the natives', 'the tourist's point of view' increasingly prevailed.[529] As a result of the UCC's intensifying lobbying efforts, the governor allocated publication funds, provided photographs, and wrote an introduction for a guidebook for visitors. [530] The 'Fauna Protectionists' – whose 'anxiety' apparently needed to be considered – was a category that very much included the governor, who became a member of the SPFE, penning pieces for its journal. [531] He developed a passionate interest in Uganda's wildlife, increasingly swapping his rifle for his camera on visits to renowned wildlife spots like

[527] Pitman to Chief Secretary 21 November 1933, UNA, Sec.Top/12/H/H.24/9.I/17; Pitman, *A game warden among*, pp. 160-163.
[528] PCNP to Chief Secretary, 2 March 1934, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/23
[529] E.L. Scott to S. of S., 18 August 1934, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/9; Secretary for Native Affairs to Chief Secretary, 22 March 1934, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/9.
[530] 'Advertising Uganda', *Uganda Herald*, 18 August 1933. See the guidebook Harold Beken Thomas and R. Scott, *Uganda* (London, 1935).
[531] Secretary for Native Affairs to Chief Secretary, 22 March 1934, UNA, SecTop/12/H/H.24/9.I/9; Bernard Bourdillon, 'Notes on Unusual Specimen of Uganda Kob', *JSPFE* 28 (1936), p. 23.

Murchison Falls and the Belgian Congo's Albert National Park, and sharing his stories and photographs with *The Field* magazine.[532]

After receiving approvals from London for the boundary changes, the secretariat gave permission for the 1,700 exiles in Kitana-Kigorobya to return to the expanded Bugungu Exempted Area at around the turn of 1935.[533] But both local inhabitants and Bunyoro-based British officials continued to view the new Game Reserve boundary, especially vis-à-vis the Victoria Nile, as 'unsatisfactory'. Dauncey Tongue took this matter up with the Game Warden, but to no avail.[534] It was not so much the undesirable boundary, as it was lack of protection outside of it, that perturbed Bugungu most, however. Pitman remained largely unsympathetic to the imperilment of Bugungu's residents, rejecting their demands for a full-time game guard. 'It is not an easy locality to protect economically', he complained, 'for it is so remote'.[535]

Little support for the district administration's demands could be mustered. Dauncey Tongue was to depart from Bunyoro in early 1937, and the flurry of outside interest in Bugungu's potential began to subside from about 1936. The British-owned LAR Ltd's operations had collapsed in 1935 due to a combination of freak 'accidental' fires, one death, marketing obstacles, and a fundamental lack of

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[532] 'H.E.'s safari - in the West Nile District', *Uganda Herald*, 12 May 1933; Robert D. Pearce, *Sir Bernard Bourdillon* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 163-164; B.H. Bourdillon, 'With the white rhinoceros in Uganda: the story of two mornings' photography', *The Field*, 19 May 1934, p. 1170

[533] Approval came only after the Acting Governor Scott had agreed to compensate for the diminution of the reserve with the addition of a similarly-sized, uninhabited area to the north of the Gulu section. See 'Legal Notice No. 175 of 1934', *Supplement to the Uganda Official Gazette* 27, no. 32 (1934), pp. 209-210.

[534] 21/5/35, BTB2, HDA; C.R.S. Pitman, 'Demarcated line of elephant control in Bunyoro Game Reserve', August 1935, NHMA, PIT/B76.

[535] UP, *ARGD 1935* (Entebbe, 1936), p. 13.

ecological knowledge.[536] The firm had also learnt the hard way that fishing nets had to be made of certain materials to be effective, though the company's sale of its nets of smaller-mesh and other gear to local people meant that they briefly 'reaped a rich harvest'. New technologies – involving particular seine and set nets (gill nets) and methods were quickly domesticated. But the people of Bugungu faced challenges in the form of high initial costs, and the risk crocodiles and hippopotamus posed to set nets.[537] The main constraint was marketing. Selling directly to the Congo's Mahagi Port was prohibited; fish needed to be dispatched under licence to Mahagi Port via customs at Butiaba. Those who broke these rules were exposed to the sharp vicissitudes of both the lake crossing in dangerous dug-outs, and fluctuations in price, which at any rate remained too low to be worth accepting the manifold risks. Fishers continued to make sporadic demands for an official market in Bugungu, where buyers could come.[538] Coutinho, the Goan fisherman-buyer from Kasenyi, also began a small, seine net operation on the north-western shore at Wankende.[539] But he too was gone in 1936. The industry was reported to be 'static'.[540]

Over the next couple of years, an increasingly neglected Bugungu was under threat from various directions. In 1936, the lowlands endured severe drought and famine. In their wake, a deluge threatened as the Egyptian Government had reached a preliminary agreement with Belgium regarding the Albert Nile dam.[541]

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[536] A.J. Rusk to Crown Agents for the Colonies, 5 May 1933, UKNA, CO 536/175/12; UP, *ARGD* 1933 (Entebbe, 1934), pp. 62-64; UP, *ARGD 1934* (Entebbe, 1935), pp. 62-68.
[537] UP, *ARGD* 1935 (Entebbe, 1936), pp. 51-52; C. R. S. Pitman, 'Address 25th May, 1936', *JSPFE* 29 (1936), pp. 9-12.
[538] 18.12.37, BTB2, HDA.
[539] 13/2/1935, BTB2, HDA; UP, *ARGD* 1935 (Entebbe, 1936), p. 50; Bakonzi, 'The gold mines', pp. 214-215, 366.
[540] UP, *ARGD 1934* (Entebbe, 1935), p. 68; UP, *ARGD 1936* (Entebbe, 1937), p. 48.
[541] 'Lake Albert survey', *Uganda Herald*, 8 May 1935.

The state of the road only intensified the area's marginality. A serviceable track had not lasted long, and officials had soon decided that constructing an all-weather road to connect Bugungu with the escarpment was 'impossible', at least not without 'colossal expenditure' due to the distance involved, and the absence of suitable materials in the lowlands.[542] A heavy toll was taken on incipient missionary and educational endeavours by these combined conditions.[543]

Even the lowlanders' limited gains against the wildlife preservationists were soon reversed under Philip Mitchell, whose stint as governor began in October 1935. The mid-1930s witnessed an outpouring of news coverage, accounts, films and photographs of the Falls and the riverine lowlands from the promoters and consumers of this tourist experience.[544] To visit Uganda without seeing 'one of the wonders of the world' was 'almost sacrilege', as the *Herald* put it in 1935.[545] Mitchell was quickly carried away on this wave of boosterism. Less than three months after arriving in Uganda, Mitchell had flown the editors of *Uganda Herald* and the *Uganda Guardian* to Murchison Falls in an effort to encourage more coverage of tourism.[546] It was the beginning of an enduring personal attachment, which saw Mitchell visit with increasing frequency.[547]

The fragility of the tourist trade had been temporarily exposed at the end of Bourdillon's tenure, amid the delayed fallout of the Wall Street Crash, when there

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[542] 19/12/1938, BTB2, HDA.
[543] Berder, 9 April 1935, A.G.M.Afr., GEN.204; R.H. Baines, 1 July 1938, Annual Letter 1938 (Masindi), CMSA, G3/AL/1935-1939.
[544] Edward E Long, 'Where to Go for Winter Sunshine', *Illustrated London News*, 20 October 1934; 'Africa – and the Holy Land', *Illustrated London News*, 12 October 1935; Jay Marston, 'Uganda, land of something new', *National Geographic* 71, no. 1 (1937), pp. 109-130.
[545] 'Notes by the way', *Uganda Herald*, 20 November 1935.
[546] 'Flying over the Murchison Falls', *Uganda Herald*, 1 January 1936.
[547] P. Mitchell, diary entries for 13-14 April 1936, RHL, MSS.Afr.r.101.

was a sharp drop in visitor numbers, especially from the US.[548] But in 1937 the industry had bounced back, boosted by exposure from Bourdillon's earlier investments in publicity, the 1936 Johannesburg Empire Exhibition, and the establishment of promotional organisations such as the East Africa Publicity Association. Numbers of passengers on the Murchison Falls excursion rose from 389 to 622 between 1936 and 1938.[549] The increase encouraged and was encouraged by further investments by the Lake Albert Hotel (now located at Bukumi) and KUR&H.[550] Visits by British royals, members of the nobility, politicians, and Hollywood film crews brought the falls to public attention around the world.[551] This tourism and, by extension, the game reserve, were growing in importance.

Figure 25: 'S.W.S. "Lugard" anchored below the falls' (c.1936).[552]

[548] 'Bunyoro Notes', *Uganda Herald*, 21 February 1934; 'Murchison Falls excursions', *Uganda Herald*, 30 January 1935.
[549] UP, *ARGD* 1936 (Entebbe, 1937), p. 35; UP, *ARGD 1937* (Entebbe, 1938), p. 32; UP, *ARGD 1938* (Entebbe, 1939), p. 32.
[550] 'Hotel facilities in Bunyoro', *Uganda Herald*, 16 October 1935; 'Bright tourist prospects in Uganda', *Uganda Herald*, 20 January 1937; 'Butiaba', *Uganda Herald*, 23 February 1938; KUR&H, *General Manager's Bulletin*, no. 24 (Nairobi, 1939), pp. 5-8.
[551] Windsor and Chalmers, *Sport*, pp. 58-60; UP, *ARGD 1937* (Entebbe, 1938), p. 32.
[552] KUR&H, *The travellers' guide*.

Visitors were invited to escape to a landscape of romance and adventure, where they could follow in the footsteps not only of the celebrities of the day, but also white imperial heroes. Vestiges of the period of Turco-Egyptian occupation were appropriated and repurposed by the colonial state, at considerable expense. KUR&H's promotional material provided short biographies of the Bakers, and Gordon and Emin, 'who blazed the African trail' along the waterways.[553] As per an earlier request from the Deputy Director of Surveys H. B. Thomas concerning sites of 'historical and archaeological interest', the DC Bunyoro had in 1935 identified 'Gordon's [Fort] Magungu' for 'commemoration'.[554] Such discourses and practices evoked a historical genealogy of European encounters, as a means of both promoting the attraction, and justifying its appropriation.

At the same time writers recast this landscape as a timeless, pristine wilderness; but one that was threatened by the sort of 'civilisation' that had already corrupted other celebrated locales like Victoria Falls. The riverine lowlands were 'nature's zoo', or brought to mind 'the garden of Eden'.[555] 'Set in the most remarkable frame of wild Africa', the falls were 'unspoiled by man's intrusion' and 'belong to Mother Africa'. Murchison Falls remained 'one spot (...) that Adam might recognize could he return to earth'. Such accounts erased or at the very least obscured the historical reality of the landscape as one shaped by African agency, and of the falls as a place of local and regional religious significance and pilgrimage. 'Human beings cannot spoil their fascination', noted one KUR&H writer – in strikingly obfuscatory fashion – since 'past circumstances' had 'compelled the population to

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553 KUR&H, *The travellers' guide to Kenya and Uganda* (Nairobi, 1936), p. 35.
554 A.H. Cox, Acting CS to DC Bunyoro, 24 August 1931, HDA, LAND/105; DC Bunyoro to PCNP, 11 April 1935, HDA, LAND/105.
555 J.O. Buckler, 'Lake Albert and its Nile', in *East African Annual 1933-1934* (Nairobi, 1934), pp. 40-49; 'A trip to the Murchison Falls', *Uganda Herald*, 18 March 1932.

move'.[556] Africans were often only permitted into the historical frame selectively – in tales that served to augment the romance of the setting. Written accounts of the falls often referred to a legend of a time in the remote past when two suitors of a 'dusky maiden' on one side of the gorge fell to their doom after being dared to leap across the falls to win her hand.[557]

These discourses exercised a powerful hold over Mitchell. Large-scale development projects fell by – or were pushed into – the wayside. Contrary to the recommendations of consultant engineers hired by Bourdillon, Mitchell objected to hydro-electric proposals for Murchison Falls. [558] Mitchell had assented to including much of the area within the oil exploration licence granted to African & European Investment Co. Ltd of Johannesburg. But the test holes the company started drilling in November 1937, and Uganda's first deep wells, drilled in 1938-1939 were all around Butiaba and Kibiro – well beyond either the old or new boundaries or the game reserve.[559] It was of some relief to Mitchell when AEIC relinquished its oil prospecting licence in early 1940, after failing to discover commercial oil reserves.[560] The governor later admitted that he feared that if

[556] H.F. Varian, 'Notes on a Survey of the Victoria Falls in 1905-1906', *GJ* 84, no. 1 (1934), pp. 65-72; KUR&H, *The travellers' guide*, p. 129.
[557] Philip Euen Mitchell, *African Afterthoughts* (London, 1954), pp. 174-175.
[558] Preece, Cardew & Rider, 'Hydro electric investigation of the Victoria Nile', 29 June 1935, UKNA, CO 536/184; 'Excerpt from Notes on an Interview given by His Excellency Sir Philip Mitchell to Mr L.A. Johnson', n.d. [1936?], UNA, SecTop/BOX7/P/P.0053/03.
[559] Governor P.E. Mitchell to S. of S. W.G.A. Ormsby-Gore, 6 July 1937, UNA, SecTop/BOX 2/ M/M.006-06/II; 'Oil prospects in Uganda', *East African Standard*, 3 September 1937.
[560] C.B. Bisset, 'Comments on the discontinuation of the oil boring', 11 July 1940, UNA, SecTop/BOX 2/M/M.006-06/IV.

'some busy-body' discovered oil or minerals near the falls, this 'lovely, wild place' would be despoiled by commerce and industrial development.[561]

Figure 26: The Kenyan and Uganda Railways and Harbours, 'The Murchison Falls Uganda' (1938).[562]

[561] Mitchell, *African Afterthoughts*, p. 175.
[562] From *UJ* 5, no. 3 (1938).

The governor and the Game Department clawed back Bugungu for the elephants, wildlife tourists, and imperial nostalgics. Mitchell's administration – Pitman included – continued to fend off pressure for national parks at this time. The London Convention of 1933 was ratified in mid-January 1936 but did not constitute a binding obligation.[563] Game reserves were a different matter entirely, however. In July 1938, the governor wrote to the Colonial Office seeking approval for a Game Reserve boundary alteration that would reverse the excision of 1934. In his letter he made reference to the Game Department's concerns that harassment by licensed hunters had caused elephants in Bugungu to menace tourists in the reserve on the KUR&H trip.[564] But Mitchell had the audacity to frame this request primarily as a response to local demands relayed by the PC for Northern Province. Mitchell claimed that the Bugungu settlement had become 'the headquarters of holders of game licences, some of them of an undesirable type, of whose misbehaviour the Bagungu Chief has complained'.[565] The Bugungu settlement area was reincorporated into the game reserve in September 1938. Mitchell had informed the Colonial Office that he had received assurances from the Game Department that increased protection would be afforded to the Bugungu settlement against marauding elephants. Yet Pitman, by now the Chairman of the Uganda Publicity Committee, had little intention to make good on these promises, as he believed 'adequate protection' of the settlement to be inimical to tourism.[566]

[563] 'Notes of a discussion', 21 January 1936, UKNA, CO 822/68/13; Merrick to S. of S., 23 November 1937, UKNA, CO 323/1516/15; C.R.S. Pitman, *A game warden takes stock* (London, 1942), pp. xiv-xv.
[564] UP, *ARGD 1938* (Entebbe, 1939), p. 12.
[565] Mitchell to S. of S., 6 August 1938, UKNA, CO 822/87/11; UP, *ARGD 1938* (Entebbe, 1939), p. 12.
[566] UP, *ARGD 1934* (Entebbe, 1935), p. 16.

Mukukuusa's complaints clearly did not constitute local support for the Exempted Area's reincorporation into the Bunyoro Game Reserve. Even the mukama had not been consulted beforehand; the boundary alteration was 'therefore contrary to the Bunyoro Agreement', as one disapproving touring district official noted.[567] This lack of consultation was not entirely surprising: Mitchell had come to view the Mukama – and the 1933 Agreement – in a less-than-favourable light.[568] The Mukama had in British eyes increasingly become dictatorial and impecunious, sacking his most capable and independent-minded chiefs, since the signing of the Bunyoro Agreement in 1933.[569] He distributed these roles as a form of patronage largely to his sycophantic former servants and, in an effort to support some of the dozens of acknowledged children he sired, men wealthy enough to buy their positions.[570] This tendency had served to steadily erode the authority of the Mukama and that of his chiefs – known as 'the Mukama's 'spears' (*macumu g'Omukama*).

Reflecting diminishing prospects for expansion of the Bugungu Exempted Area eastward, later in 1938 the colonial government invested in 'Gordon's Magungu'. Insulated from African interference by its location some distance inside the Sleeping Sickness Area, a bronze tablet detailing the nature of the site was finally fixed on the memorial cairn in 1939.[571] The same year a District Officer G.V. Vane, accompanied by the CMS's P.B. Ridsdale, gathered artefacts from the site, inspiring Thomas, now as outgoing Director of Surveys, to write about this

[567] 8/12/1939, BTB2, HDA.
[568] Philip Euen Mitchell, *Native Administration* (Entebbe, 1939), pp. 14-15.
[569] Winyi to DC Bunyoro, 18 October 1939, HDA.
[570] DC Bunyoro to PCWP, 14 April 1950, HDA, S.NAF.2/1.
[571] DC Bunyoro to PCNP, 9 November 1938, HDA, LAND/105.

outpost as one of the several 'little oases' of a project of 'civilization and discipline' that prefigured the wonders of British rule.[572]

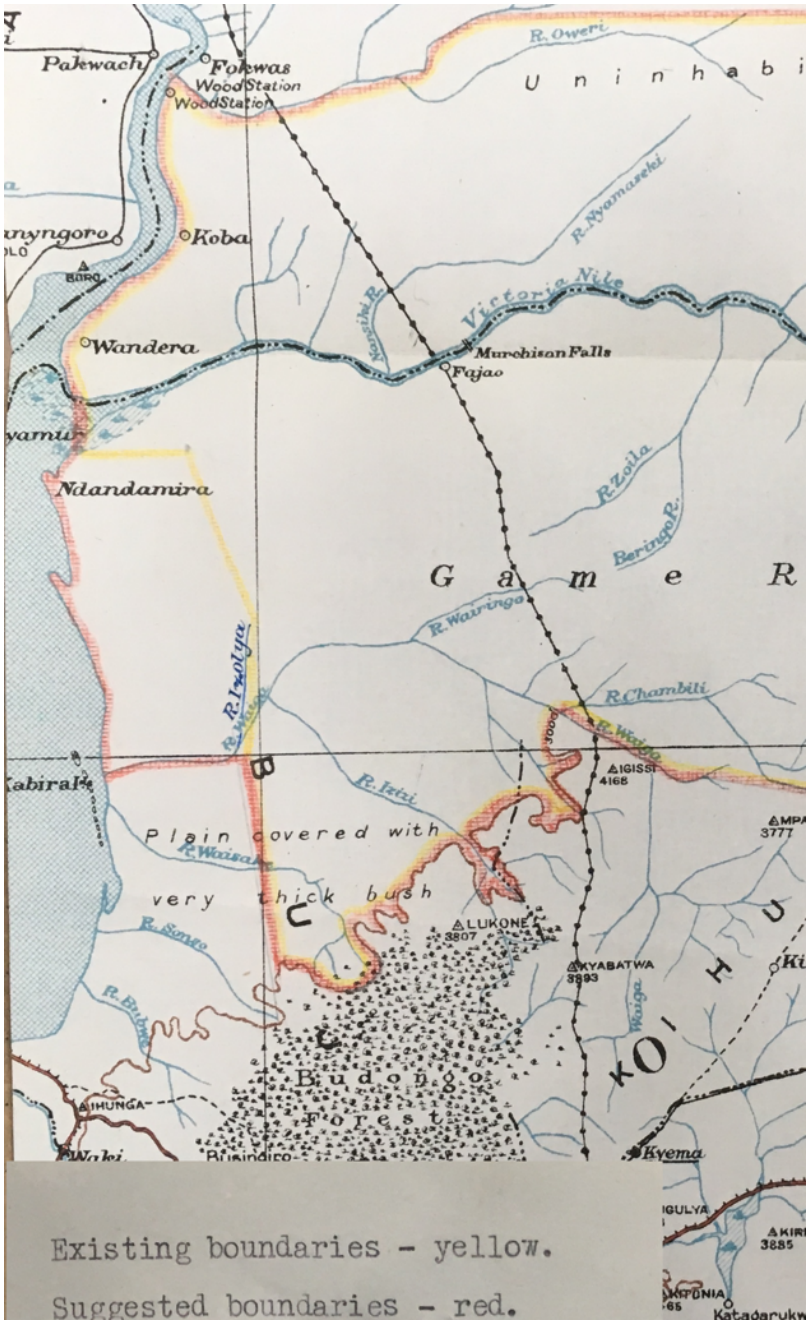

Figure 27: Untitled map of boundary change (1938).[573]

[572] H. B. Thomas, 'Notes on the Sudanese Corps in Mexico (1863-1867) and on Fort Magungu', *UJ* 8, no. 1 (1940), pp. 28-32.
[573] From Governor P.E. Mitchell to S. of S. Malcom Macdonald, 6 August 1938, UKNA, CO 822/87/11.

Conclusion

Different actors within Uganda's inter-war administrations were locked in disagreement over Bugungu, as they sought to contend with the difficult legacy of the circumstances of the 1922 return. Amid a wider resignification of 'unspoilt' communities and environments, the government found itself caught in a bind over whether to permanently remove the people, or, the protected area status from Bugungu. For a time it appeared that certain administrators had secured an expansion of settlement at the expense of the game reserve for a community that had emerged as 'primitive' ethnological favourites through the revalorisation elements of ethno-civilisational stereotyping. But the the increasingly powerful wildlife preservationist movement had eroded these gains almost instantly,

A less spectacular mode of classificatory violence took hold, however. After being wrenched and insulated from their wider cosmopolitan Albertine connections for more than a decade in one perverse and peculiar social experiment in ethnic exclusivity at the Bagungu Location, the exiles had returned to another such experiment in Bugungu.[574] Ideas of ethno-civilisational hierarchy had been violently inscribed among the people of the Exempted Area. They were punished harshly by their own chief for their membership of the 'primitive' Gungu collective. They were also, and increasingly, collectively punished by neglect from the newly formed Game Department for the apparent impertinence of distancing themselves from colonial power by deciding to return.

[574] For a similar measure in Buganda with regard to the Ssese islands, which the Kabaka challenged, see Soff, 'A history', p. 196.

CHAPTER FIVE: *Domination, difference and deflection on the capitalist frontier, c.1938-c.1952*

'He who is above you hits you with your own club'.[575]

Between the late 1930s and the early 1950s Bugungu was to be transformed – or retransformed – in the official mind into a hotbed of illegality and disorder as the intrusion of racialised capitalist production saw the fishing industry develop beyond recognition and supervision. In the post-war years Bugungu became a target of heavy-handed collectivising punishments at the hands of upland chiefs and militaristic game and fisheries officials who adopted attitudes and approaches that in some ways represented continuity, but in others marked a return to the punitive 'pacification' phase of the early colonial encounter. Part of the local response constituted a project of reputational reinvention in order to reclaim or maintain control of lucrative littoral resources. Chiefs and wildly wealthy men of an emergent capitalist class attempted to reconfigure established and internalised ethno-civilisational stereotypes and redirect classificatory violence. These men cast outsiders as the degraded agents of disorder and disobedience in order to deflect and appropriate the bureacratic and ill-tempered conservationist energies of the overbearing post-war activist state.

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575 Proverb in Lugungu ('*akukiiri akukuutisya gwokweti*'), from Koosya Bahoire, 'Akukiiri Akukuutisya Gwokweti', KBP. In Runyoro, '*akulemere akuteeza ogu okwasire*'.

Accumulation, infiltration, and degradation, 1938-c.1946

Held back by renewed colonial discrimination and a reactionary ruler, Bunyoro as a whole fell into a state of decline in the late 1930s and 1940s. But Bugungu experienced dramatic economic transformation. Previous fish marketing constraints were overcome by new traders. Fishers were to continue to intermittently demand permission to sell at Mahagi Port, which was often rumoured to be offering higher prices.[576] But a compromise with the authorities was reached in 1938 in the form of an arrangement with a European businessman, Odin Ernst Sunde, the son of Norwegian settlers. Soon known as Lake Albert Fisheries (LAF) Ltd, his firm provided salt and drying sheds at Kitara and Ndandamire, as part of a large-scale, regular systematic marketing operation for the catches of African fishers.[577] Like LAR Ltd before him, Sunde had seen potential to profit from exporting to the Congo via Butiaba. The managers of the Belgian Congo's Kilo-Moto mining complex and other labour-intensive settler enterprises required more and more fish for the rations of their expanding African workforce at this time. Per unit of fine gold produced, Kilo-Moto in 1938 employed more than six times as many Africans as did the mines of the Witwatersrand in South Africa.[578] As a result of securing contracts with Congo buyers, each year Sunde was able to set a fixed price. The amount of dried fish exported to Mahagi Port via Butiaba in 1939, up from just over 4 tons in 1938, to 65 tons in 1939, of which Bugungu's fisheries contributed the majority.

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[576] 20.12.40 & 3.9.45, BTB2.
[577] 3.9.45 & 3.3.46, BTB2; 'Uganda General: Provincial Meeting', 30 May 1946, RHL, Mss.Afr.s.1425/3/1/D.I (1).
[578] A.D. Roberts, 'The Gold Boom of the 1930s in Eastern Africa', *African Affairs* 85, no. 341 (1986), pp. 545-562 (550).

The war provided a further fillip to the fishing industry. Increased investment and production at the Kilo-Moto played a significant but largely overlooked role in maintaining gold supplies to meet a wartime surge in demand. The labour force at these mines reached 40,000 in 1940 – 5,000 more workers than even Union Minière du Haut-Katanga's world-renowned copper-mining concern.[579] Amid constant high demand, in 1940 the total weight of fish exported to Congo's Mahagi Port via reached 214 tons, made up almost entirely of catches from Bugungu. In two years, these exports had increased by a factor of 50.[580] The war also spared the shoreline fishing villages the anticipated dam deluge, as that project was indefinitely postponed, and from 1942-1948 introduced further new demand in the form of a camp of 3,000 Polish refugees at Nyabeya on the road between Butiaba and Masindi.[581]

Sunde's arrangement constituted a rather discreet, complex quid pro quo. Pitman publicly asserted from the late 1930s that the inshore fishery was a 'strictly limited' resource 'best left in African hands' as it was unable to 'support organised commercial fishing on a large scale'.[582] Counter to this professed policy, the Game Department had quietly granted Sunde not only a virtual monopsony in Bugungu, but also the right to operate a fishing camp himself. The Game Department had been willing to accept this arrangement because of the stability Sunde brought to the market.

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[579] David Northrup, *Beyond the bend in the river : African labor in eastern Zaire, 1865-1940* (Athens, OH, 1988); Bakonzi, 'The gold mines'.
[580] UP, *ARGD 1939* (Entebbe, 1940) pp. 18, 23; UP, *ARPC 1939-1946* (Entebbe, 1949) p. 96.
[581] K. Fawzy O/C (Egyptian Irrigation Mission) to DC Bunyoro, 4 May 1939, HDA.
[582] UP, *ARGD 1939* (Entebbe, 1940), p. 23.

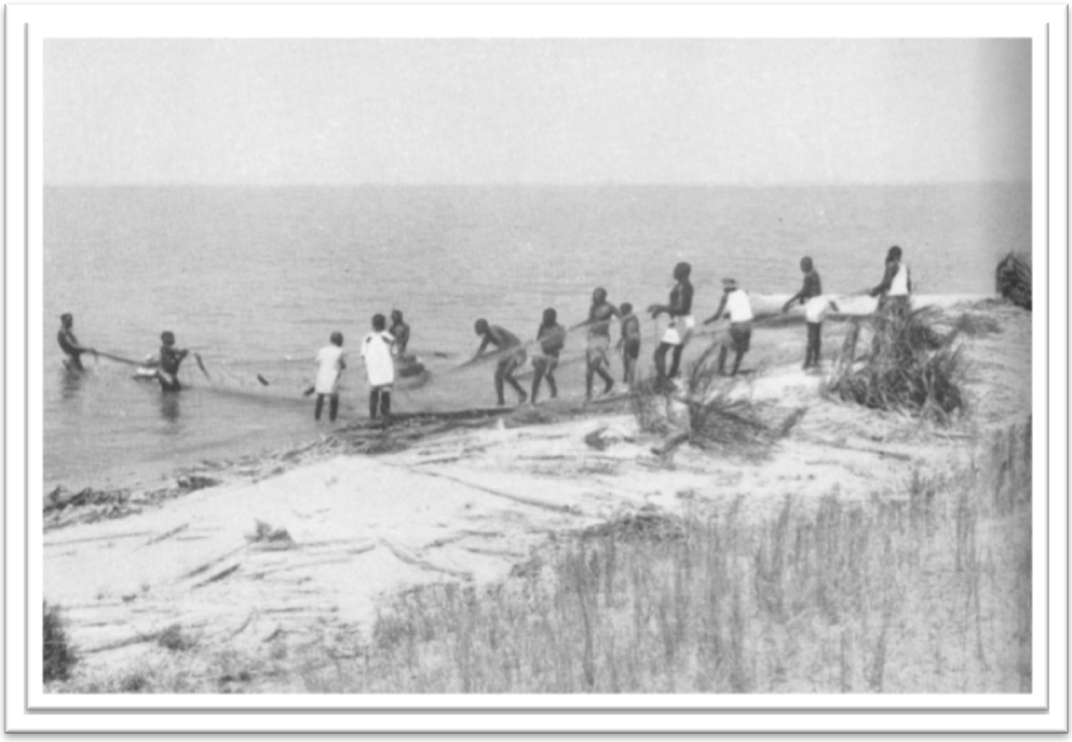

Figure 28: B.G. Kinloch, 'Hauling a seine net at Buliisa' (n.d. but c. 1950).[583]

The boom had involved various largely uncontrolled influxes. The rise of the fishing industry was only possible owing to migrant labour. In the late 1930s, the local labour market in fishing was known for its 'capriciousness', and employers 'suffered' 'despite the paucity of economic competition'.[584] To avoid expenses, fishers usually adopted the non-economic means of exploiting labour by employing their own children. But the labour requirements for setting and hauling gill nets and seine nets were significant. A lot of African fishing was conducted from dugouts, with a crew of three or four men required to set and haul gill nets, which were left overnight to catch *mpoi*. The seine net fisheries which were responsible for the biggest catches had even larger labour requirements; some nets required dozens of men. But even poorer young Gungu men living

[583] UP, *ARGD* 1952 (Entebbe, 1953), plate XXIV.
[584] 'Annual Report, 1939 (Bunyoro)', HDA.

inland would not demean themselves performing the despised, arduous task of manual labour for wages under the direction of someone beyond the family. The answer increasingly came in the form of labourers from the increasingly land-scarce Alur highlands to work as hired porters, laboring at a rate of Shs. 6 or 7 per month, plus food, or taking a share of the catch.[585]

Economic transformation occurred largely in the absence of regulation. As was the case across much of the British empire's inland fisheries, Lake Albert until after the war was characterised by a relative lack of colonial intervention in the form of marketing and production controls. Attempts had been made since at least as early as the mid-1930s to indirectly control the exploitation of the lake by restricting permits required for the cutting of trees, as it was feared that if all applications were granted 'the lake would be dark with canoes' involved in gill net fisheries. [586] But there had been no fishing regulations besides restrictions in the sleeping sickness rules regarding the type of vessels and mesh of the nets used. Several years before the war, the Game Department had been charged with responsibility for the fisheries but had not been given funds.[587]

The wartime colonial state rested relatively lightly on Bugungu. Almost nobody from Bugungu was recruited into the army. While 'the Banyoro' were 'considered unsuitable' for the King's African Rifles, one official soon after the beginning of the war ventured that 'the Bagungu might well make good soldiers', as they were

[585] UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), p. 25; Charles F. Hickling, Travel journal entry, 27 August 1946, RHL, MSS.Brit.Emp.s.520, Box 1/4.
[586] 20.11.36, 19.12.37, 13.7.43, BTB2.
[587] 'Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of the Uganda Protectorate, 1932', UKNA, CO 536/178/5

'good water-men' and 'all have spears'.[588] But old stereotypes concerning indocility and incorrigibility put paid to such enquiries. At the same time, wartime conditions precluded any serious official reconsideration of local expressions – often led by the redoubtable Yubu Kyamukatuka Katongole – of the 'old desire' to access 'forbidden country' by expanding the Exempted Area.[589] But re-incorporation within the Bunyoro-Gulu Game Reserve was not deeply felt as the Game Department demonstrated more willingness to send game guards. Tourism was no longer a priority; visitor numbers on the KUR&H excursions had plummeted during the war.[590] Taxation increased as did demands for labour for the rubber estate above the escarpment in Budongo.[591] But owing to 'difficulty of marketing' it was deemed 'pointless' to press cotton cultivation which diminished to 'negligible' proportions.[592] Logistics hampered supervisorial capacities. With the shoreline road 'impassable' for more than a year at a time, Bugungu was rendered 'impossible to reach' by road, and government water transport rarely readily available.[593]

An awful lot fell on a sub-county chief. But in the late 1930s, Yowaasi Mukukuusa was not up to the task; he retired at the end of 1940 after 18 years as sub-county chief. His departure constituted a watershed in the history of Bugungu; it marked the end of not only hereditary chiefly rule by the Bacwa Banyabyaara line, but

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[588] Military Report, 1940, UKNA, WO 287/138; DC Bunyoro to PCWP, 5 August 1947, UKNA, CO 1018/82; Richard Stone interviewed by Alison Smith, 25 February 1971, RHL, Mss.Afr.s.2114 (1).
[589] 9.12.39, 18.12.42, 13.7.43, 22/5/1940, BTB2.
[590] UP, *ARGD 1939* (Entebbe, 1940), p. 14; UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), p. 6; 'Report on Bunyoro District for the year 1942', HDA, Bunyoro Annual Reports folder; 20.12.40, 29.5.41, 5.10.42 & 13.7.43, BTB2.
[591] 20.12.40, 1.6.42 & 13.7.43, BTB2.
[592] 29.5.42 & 30.4.4, BTB2.
[593] 18.12.42, 18.12.43, 29.5.42& _9.5.42, BTB2; Diaire de n.d. du sacre coeur, Masindi, 9 April 1945, A.G.M.Afr., D.OR.168.

also the end of lowlanders' hold on the office. A man from the plateau called Tomasi Tibeita who was seen and saw himself as non-Gungu was appointed as the new chief. But he was not subjected to much protest. Like his predecessor, Tibeita adopted 'heavy' sentences he believed the people of Bugungu required; a strong hand was 'needed', as one district office put it, 'in primitive areas such as this'.[594] But he lacked Mukukuusa's familiarity with the lowlands and struggled to navigate and control the 'fish rush'.

The special fishing privileges the administration accorded Sunde in Bugungu was at least partly a manifestation of an expedient exchange which saw him perform certain security and regulatory functions of the state. As had the case in the mid-1930s with LAR Ltd, the nearest Pitman had to a fisheries officer in Bugungu was a private businessman, who gathered catch data and intelligence. Tellingly – although also unsurprisingly given Bugungu's dearth of literacy – he was aided in his business by sometime employees, the retired chief Mukukusa, and former government clerk, Yosiya K. Wairindi. Bugungu was of course never a formal concession; but the pragmatic arrangement of partial, informal outsourcing represented clearly the alliances that were possible between capital and colonial policy at the periphery.

Bugungu became a byword for illegality and disorder during the war. Some of the activities represented continuity. Local residents, particularly the young and the marginal, consumed and traded meat from game.[595] The state had limited capacity to enforce game and sleeping sickness regulations. Cases taken against illegal hunting by Africans in Bugungu were not unheard of, but they were rare

[594] 28.5.42, BTB2.
[595] Bahoire, 'Kuruga'; 3.9.45, BTB2.

during the war.[596] Much the same as the chiefs' attitudes to illegal alcohol-brewing, a blind eye had long been turned as long as their 'traditional' 'take-off' was provided.[597]

But Bugungu also enticed a motley bunch of European white settlers from the Congo who sought to take advantage of this lack of fishing regulation, as well as better fishing grounds and more suitable landing sites. Some encouraged the smuggling direct to Mahagi, where it was exchanged for contraband. In 1940, the authorities had permitted the entry of competition to break Sunde's monopsony. At least one businessman, a Greek from Bunia called Nico Jeronimidis, was able to operate on the same terms as Sunde. He was fishing and trading at Kitara Point until about 1942, when he, along with various other European encroachers, were given notice to quit.[598] The Game Department was perturbed by the 'exploiters' who had, to government officials, 'openly admitted that they are not interested in the welfare of the fisheries' as they regarded 'fish solely from a profit making point of view' – their object being 'maximum immediate benefit'.[599]

These rapacious capitalists were not to easily dissuaded. An 'outstanding feature' of Lake Albert fishery during the war had been the 'numerous attempts' of such men to gain a footing on Ugandan lakeshores; their scheming had to be 'consistently resisted' by the authorities.[600] European ownership of fishing camps, equipment, and Congo-built timber vessels was easily concealed, especially when

[596] 13.7.43, BTB2.
[597] East Africa High Commission, *Fauna of British Eastern and Central Africa: Proceedings of a Conference Held in Nairobi on 8th and 9th May 1947* (Nairobi, 1948), p. 38.
[598] 3.9.45 & 3.3.46, BTB2; J.A. Berder, 'Petit diaire', January 1942, A.G.M.Afr., P.59/2.
[599] UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), pp. 23-24.
[600] UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), pp. 23-24.

Sunde's monitoring efforts temporarily ceased owing to wartime service. Officials noted with some satisfaction that African trader-fishermen were 'ousting non-native concerns' in mid-1943; leading the charge was one Wandera Kalogiro, who had roots elsewhere in Bunyoro. He employed some 40 men, and paid fishers a price that meant LAF, while managed by Sunde's deputies, had 'almost closed down'. But it soon emerged that Africans like Kalogiro were being used as fronts for European – largely Greek – trading and fishing interests. The authorities clamped down on smuggling and illegal European buying in about 1944-1945. [601]

Around the end of the war began a 'time of boom'. Fish prices rose remarkably. 1945 prices stood at double that of 1940, and by the end of 1946 triple – somewhere in the region of £65 per ton.[602] Seine nets and flax cord for making eight-inch *mpoi* gill-nets were 'virtually unprocurable', so fishers increasingly fashioned gear from the durable cord from salvaged motor tyres, even though the one South Asian *duka* that stocked them charged 'ridiculously high' prices. [603] Producing fish to the value of 'nearly £20,000', Bugungu was widely considered to contain the 'most important' villages among the several flourishing ones on the Ugandan shore of Lake Albert. [604] The lowlands were flush with 'profits from fish'; '[t]he Bagungu' were 'enjoying previously unknown prosperity'.[605]

But not many were reinvesting heavily in fishing operations. They were investing a lot elsewhere. Colonial visitors referred to some of the leading Gungu gill-net

[601] 18.12.42, 14.7.43, & 3.9.45, BTB2; J.A. Berder, Diary entry, 6 January 1941, A.G.M.Afr.59/2; Int. Gungu 11a; Bahoire, 'Kuruga'.
[602] 3.9.45, BTB2; UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), pp. 26-27.
[603]UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), p.6 ; 30.4.45, 3.3.46, BTB2.
[604] E.B. Worthington, *A development plan for Uganda: December 1946* (London, 1947), p. 38; UP, *ARPC 1939-1946* (Entebbe, 1949) p. 96.
[605] 3.4.45 & 3.9.45, BTB2.

fishers as 'wealthy cattle-capitalists'.[606] Livestock acted as a means to acquire prestige and to build funds both for retirement and to meet bridewealth. A trypanosomiasis outbreak in the late 1930s had virtually wiped out Bunyoro's 12,500 or so cattle. It was only in Bugungu that large numbers of cattle had survived. Already in 1940 there were about 3,300 cattle (in addition to roughly 6,800 goats and 5,700 sheep).[607] As livestock was frequently sold, numbers were highly variable, but there were often as many cattle, or sheep, or goats as there were people; Bugungu's population was about 5,000 in 1945. [608]

It was those recently arrived from outside who owned the largest fishing operations in Bugungu. Incursions had increased along with the possibilities of accumulation. More was being reinvested in these operations by outsiders. Attracted by the 'news of good fishing' migrants from West Nile and Congo descended on the 'temporary' fishing camps.[609] Africans were flocking to Bugungu from outside, and not only as porters. Some of these were the 'wealthy capitalist fishermen' from Panyimur who had started to dominate competition for the primary product at the north end of lake. One such man 'had become so prosperous that he had opened a bank account'.[610][611] The boat-owning African bosses also included men from Congo – including those fronting for 'non-native' capital, as Kalogiro had done. The regulatory regime on the Uganda side had become even more preferable. On the Belgian Congo side of the lake, the years

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[606] Charles F. Hickling, Travel journal entry, 27 August 1946, RHL, MSS.Brit.Emp.s.520, Box 1, 4.
[607] 21/5/1940, BTB2.
[608] Figures from BTB2.
[609] Charles F. Hickling, Travel journal entry, 27 August 1946, RHL, MSS.Brit.Emp.s.520, Box 1, 4.
[610] UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), p. 26.
[611] 3.3.46, BTB2; Fisheries Officer to Game Warden, 'Report for November 1949', 30 November 1949, HDA, GAM.6.

immediately after the war witnessed the imposition of fish guards and highly limited and prohibitively expensive fishing licences.[612]

As sub-county chief Tibeita was replaced in late 1945 by Yosamu Rwakaikara from Masindi – another outsider unfamiliar with Bugungu's quite special circumstances. Efforts had been made to find 'a Mugungu' for each position within the sub-county– '[t]he idea being to appoint local people whenever [the] right man appears', as one administrator later put it.[613] But the 'right man' was difficult to find – in part because of the area's very low level of engagement with colonial institutions of literacy, in part because the 'right man' also needed to have impressed the Mukama through obsequiousness or bribes.

Developmental images, ironies, and interventions in post-war

Fishing had made Bugungu 'the best gombolola [sub-county] in the district for tax collection' – 'far better than elsewhere'.[614] Exceptional contributions prompted demands for at least slightly more equitable assistance and investment. Administrators received complaints mostly about the state of the road, the tendency for game guards to let elephants 'roam' 'unmolested' in the settled Exempted Area, and the cramped conditions of that area. As had been the case before the war, some officials expressed a certain sympathy and support.[615] Bugungu had 'legitimate grouse'.[616] But not a great deal of official action was taken. 'The Bagungu are vigorous and prosperous people', a touring official

[612] David Gordon, 'Growth without Capital: A Renascent Fishery in Zambia and Katanga, 1960s to Recent Times', *JSAS* 31, no. 3 (2005), pp. 495-511.
[613] 2.12.45, BTB2.
[614] 30.4.45, 3.12.45 & 4.6.46, BTB2.
[615] 30.4.45, 3.9.45 & 4/6/46, BTB2.
[616] 23.3.47, BTB2.

remarked in 1946, 'it is unfortunate that, through lack of communications, they do not get more attention'.[617]

Less primitivist colonial officials took a dimmer view of the ironies of Bugungu. The district's most isolated and insalubrious area had the temerity to have become the richest, healthiest, and most fertile sub-county for hundreds of miles around. Though prone to reject dispensaries and ante-natal treatment, and ignored by European District Medical Officer, their 'healthy appearance and good physique' stood 'in marked contrast to their fellows who live inland'.[618] While officials hoped the market would educate them in them habits of frugality, there was 'little attempt visible at investing money' either in schooling or housing. They were 'spending much money'. Maize meal from outside was being bought from traders rather than grown in gardens; famine reserves were neglected. The small local *duka* sometimes turned over Shs 10,000 per month[619] Thousands of cattle roamed the road, trampled crops, and spread diseases. Churches and schools struggled to hold on to people, partly because the lake and the bush offered relatively easy routes to accumulation.[620]

Colonial views continued to inform, and be informed by, the prejudices of the plateau chiefs, who were now ruling Bugungu as sub-county chiefs. Oriented towards Congo economically, and away from Nyoro-Gahya cultural institutions, Bugungu had remained largely beyond the infrastructures that had opened up social capital to broader configurations of solidarity since the late 1920s, by

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[617] 4.6.46, BTB2.
[618] 20.12.40, BTB2; UP, *ARPC 1939-1946* (Entebbe, 1949), p. 103.
[619] 3.9.45, BTB2.
[620] Int. Gungu 4c; Diaire de n.d. du sacre Coeur, Masindi, 11 February 1942, 1 May 1943, and 9 April 1945, A.G.M.Afr, D.OR.168.

facilitating movement and connection through trade, intermarriage, education, and Christianity. Localised socio-cultural categories on the plateau – such as Sindi – had not entirely lost all meaning, but they began to fall out of use.[621] The persistence of the internal othering of Bugungu was inherently structured by a language of evolutionism and exoticism that owed as much to the encounter with colonial modernity as pre-colonial ethnic thought. Reported Gungu misdeeds defined proper 'Nyoro' behaviour in contradistinction. Stereotypically Bugungu was a place of backwardness, danger, perversion, and ill-discipline. Paganism there was 'common and strong', and one would 'fear' physical assault. [622] Whereas on the plateau one would 'marry properly', in Bugungu it involved a 'fight', the men would 'carry her to their home' where she would be 'forced into sex'.[623] Lowlanders spoke of uplanders 'abusing' them with various labels: '*baly'ebikere*' (frog-eaters) owing to resilient culinary taboos; '*Bigungu*' , involving dehumanisation by modification of their ethnonymic prefix; and '*baruuru*' (Alur) or '*badugudugu*', a label meaning 'the people one cannot understand', which was normally reserved for speakers of the Sudanic and Nilotic Lwo languages. [624] The writings of Nyoro court historian John Nyakatura frequently refer to 'Banyoro and Bagungu' as separate categories in his work in these years.[625] For many post-war uplanders, particularly Christians, Bugungu remained a repository of all that was undesirable in the making of a modern, civilised Nyoro nation.

[621] 'Masindi', 1928, A.G.M.Afr., GEN.202/5.
[622] Nyoro10b, 20 March 1998, JWP.
[623] Nyoro29b, 30 March 1998, JWP.
[624] Ints. Gungu 2a, 12a, 15b, 3b2.
[625] John Nyakatura, *Abakama ba Bunyoro Kitara* (St. Justin, Quebec, 1947), p. 188; Omukama to S. of S. for the Colonies, 'The Banyoro's Claim of their Lost Lands', 8 March 1948, HDA, S/NAF/2/1.

These ideas influenced colonial and Nyoro-Gahya thinking about the sort of attention Bugungu required. Deeply embedded and highly particular practices and discourses of governance were fully resuscitated as administrative routine resumed. District officials continued to use the language of difference to justify the sub-county chief's meting out of 'heavy' punishments; it was 'needed in this area', they argued.[626] Post-war higher chiefs in Bunyoro were infamous for their superciliousness and ineffectiveness.[627] These men believed that the 'right man' for chief could not be found in Bugungu, in part because of the nature of the local population. The local parish chiefs spent most of their time 'attending parties', according to the Bujenje county chief.[628] Unconcerned with cultivating the loyalty required to be succcessful, the sub-county chief Rwakaikara targeted multiple village chiefs with fines 'without any case'[629] and increasingly pressured ordinary peasants to cultivate more food and cash crops, to send their children to school, and to stop 'illegal hunting'.[630]

In agriculturally marginal spaces such as Bugungu in the 1940s, the European embodiments of post-war colonial authoritarianism were the same figures as before the war. The colonial officials whose decisions most impacted Bugungu continued to be the Game Department. The Department was still attentive primarily to the interests of tourists on the KUR&H tourist excursion to Murchison Falls which had just resumed. [631] Game Department officials increasingly emphasised the impact on of the residents of Bugungu on the

[626] 6.12.46, BTB2.
[627] Doyle, *Crisis,* pp. 175-182.
[628] 2.12.45, BTB2.
[629] 23.3.47, BTB2.
[630] 3.12.45 & 4.5.46, BTB2.
[631] UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), p. 6; 4/6/46, BTB2.

wildlife, not the reverse. Culturally shot through with militarism, the Game Department announced its return in mid-1945 forcefully. A visit from a Fort Portal-based British planter functioning as an Honorary Game Ranger resulted in heavy fines for 12 people caught hunting hippopotamus; further legal cases were taken against others caught 'refusing to take food to him'.[632] But the approach shifted back to a more familiar form as a matter of punitive economy after Pitman returned from a wartime secondment in 1946. The department exerted pressure on the local population through an extortive disciplinary policy of purposeful neglect, requiring certain behaviour of Africans in Bugungu in return for assistance. The department representatives now explicitly presented the withdrawing of protection as a means of 'penalising' the whole community whenever snares were found in the vicinity of the Nile in 1947.[633]

Such practices were soon to be absorbed as part of the new, reformist, interventionist agenda, directed by the Fabian strain of British post-war colonialism. The 1940 Colonial Development and Welfare Act was to be implemented by the new Labour government in an effort to both reassert the legitimacy of the colonial project, and rebuild the post-war British economy. A better-resourced and more ambitious colonial state set out to 'modernise' African social and economic practices in order to increase production, regulate use of natural resources and improve the welfare of Africans as a means of consolidating colonial rule.[634] In Uganda, Governor John Hathorn Hall appointed a natural

[632] 30.4.45, 3.9.45 & 4.6.46, BTB2.
[633] East Africa High Commission, *Fauna*, p. 39.
[634] D. A. Low and J. Lonsdale, 'Towards the New Order, 1945-1963', in D. A. Low and Alison Smith, *History of East Africa, vol. III* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 1-63.

scientist, E.B. Worthington, to articulate his development vision, which were spelled out in his December 1946 ten-year plan

The work of the Game Department was reconceived as that of preparing the way for national parks. The tide in official policy began to turn after October 1946 when the Labour Party's Arthur Creech Jones, previously acting as 'SPFE's conduit' while serving as colonial undersecretary, was appointed Colonial Secretary in a cabinet reshuffle. Creech was gripped by the crisis narratives about British Africa and excited by wildlife conservation's potential to serve the interests of economic and social development.[635] A similar stance was adopted in the Worthington Plan which made financial provision – albeit rather meagre – for the parks.[636]

The colonial state also identified problems and promise in the fisheries. In Worthington's plan he asserted that the rivers and lakes constituted 'large potential resources', which the Protectorate could 'no longer afford to neglect'.[637] Part of the response was to take the form of direct intervention into the regulation and development of Lake Albert's fisheries. After years of being informally outsourced to private companies, the duties and responsibilities were soon to be taken in-house by the colonial state, extending its direct control over western lacustrine peripheries. Hall's administration introduced new Fishing Rules in early 1947 and a dedicated fisheries service was created as part of the Game

[635] R.P. Neumann, 'The Postwar Conservation Boom in British Colonial Africa', *Environmental History* 7, no. 1 (2002), pp. 22-47.
[636] E.B. Worthington, *A development plan for Uganda: December 1946* (London, 1947), p. 82.
[637] Worthington, *A development*, p. 38.

Department later that year. Plans were made to recruit a Fisheries Officer for Lake Albert.

But there were other problems beyond the purview of such a department. The Fishing Rules of 1947 forced non-Africans, but not Africans, to acquire licences to engage in the fishing industry on the western lakes. These new restrictions reflected growing government concern about the disruptive political and social consequences that often accompanied the unrestrained private enterprise, particularly of the European hunter-gatherer-trader ilk that had long predominated on the western lacustrine frontiers. Even the partly informal arrangements such as that with Sunde risked African resentment. The administration needed these discreet arrangements to be discreetly dropped. Pitman reasserted a policy that Lake Albert's inshore fishery remained 'an African conducted industry' in so far as the primary product was concerned.[638] Still shaken by the anti-colonial sentiment that had manifested in the crisis that had consumed Buganda during his first few weeks in post in January 1945, Hall's administration aimed to reduce politically risky inter-racial competition over profits.

The Congo-exclusive market orientation of the Bugungu fisheries was also identified as a problem by the administration. Nutrition of colonial subjects and its connection to productivity had become a topic of concern for officialdom before the war.[639] The Africans of Uganda were, 'by European standards', 'indolent, ignorant, irresponsible and not infrequently suspicious of foreign intervention', Hall claimed; but this was 'in large measure attributable to

[638] UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), p. 24.
[639] James Vernon, *Hunger: a modern history* (London, 2007), pp. 88-117.

malnutrition and disease', he conceded.[640] Pitman bemoaned that dried fish with its 'enriching' dietary potential had been 'sacrificed' to 'non-native enterprises' across the border.[641] Out of all the protectorate's districts, malnutrition was 'probably most obvious and prevalent' in Bunyoro, an administrator ventured.[642] But the aversion to fish endured on the plateau, much to the frustration of officials. Hall's administration believed it might be able to slowly change this situation, while partly reorienting Bugungu's fishing industry away from the Congo. While many post-war colonial schemes to increase production were oriented towards export, the protectorate's plans for Bugungu's fish involved redirection of the product for domestic consumption.

As was characteristic of his private capital-friendly plan, Worthington offered vague validation of the extant fish marketing system of 'commercial organisations' operating at 'no expense to Government'.[643] But Hall's administration began to consider bringing this responsibility within the activist purview of the post-war colonial state. During the war, the colonial authorities' successful assumption of certain economic functions and controls had included monopoly responsibility for marketing of certain commodities such as cotton and rubber. Underpinned by the assumption that the vagaries of the market could not be relied upon to develop the colonies, colonial states were to shut out private capital from many industries and to intervene through new institutions. Co-operative societies were to incorporate Africans in a manner that would serve to preserve 'community' from the sharper

[640] J.H. Hall, 'Foreword: Some Notes on the Economic Development of Uganda', in E.B. Worthington, *A development plan for Uganda: December 1946* (London, 1947), pp. iii-xii (iv).
[641] UP, *ARGD Part II—Fisheries 1940-1946* (Entebbe, 1948), pp. 23-24.
[642] UP, *ARPC 1939-1946* (Entebbe, 1949), p. 103.
[643] Worthington, *A development plan*, pp. 5, 39.

edges of capital accumulation.[644] Other types of entities, such as marketing corporations, would also feature in this restructured interface. In regard to fish marketing, the PC expressed support for giving these responsibilities to a new public utility given monopoly rights to undertake the purchase, processing and marketing of fish across the protectorate, excepting Lake Victoria. [645]

In April 1947 Hall's administration appointed a committee to go into details and prepare recommendations for establishing a public utility company.[646] But its progress to launch was slowed by private interests such as Uganda Lakes (UL) Ltd, owned by white settler business panjandrum Cyril Handley Bird, which had acquired Sunde's Lake Albert business at around the turn of the year. Cognisant of - and disapproving of - the diminishing room for private capital, Bird's UL Ltd and various Asian and Ganda firms operating in Toro District, had conveniently insinuated themselves into the fish marketing sector just before the influx of state funds.[647] As talks began they had further tried their luck by proposing an elaborate series of 'interim ventures' that would also need to be absorbed. Entebbe resisted the creation of 'further vested interests' by these non-African entrepreneurs. Hall was desirous 'not to prejudice African opinion', or 'to create suspicion' in the Native Governments concerned, whose 'good-will' he also intended to obtain through shareholdings. But the value of these private firms' assets, and

[644] Andreas Eckert, 'Useful Instruments of Participation? Local Government and Cooperatives in Tanzania, 1940s to 1970s', *IJAHS* 40, no. 1 (2007), pp. 97-118.
[645] 'Minutes of Provincial Team meeting, 30 May 1946', RHL, Mss.Afr.s.1425, Box 3, no. 1, D.1(I).
[646] 'Notes of a Meeting held on the 30th May 1947', RHL, Mss.Afr.s.1425, Box 3, no. 8, F.I.
[647] Bird to Joelson, 26 October 1946, RHL, MSS.Afr.s.1674(2).

corresponding degree of share participation still became subject to debate and attempted manipulation which delayed the parastatal company's formation.[648]

While the bureaucratic wheels slowly turned in 1947, tensions were building in Bugungu. The often-precarious zero-sum competition over fish and labour intensified as high water levels inundated landing sites, reducing inshore catches. The year witnessed a thirty per cent decrease in the quantity of exports from Butiaba, while the price at Mahagi Port rose over the course of the year to reach an all-time high. The porousness of this lacustrine border was increasingly exploited. More 'non-native aliens' attempted to 'secure a footing on the Uganda shores'.[649] Their African 'fronts' came with the unfair advantage of lengthier seine nets, made of better materials. Seine nets of 250 yards were observed.[650]

The drop in exports in 1947 was only partly the result of reduced catches. Administrators enthused about the large sums fishermen were receiving from this hard currency area across the water.[651] But a lot of the currency was not coming back into the country, and the duties on the dried fish were being evaded. The African 'fronts' were thought to be among the worst offenders; but there was 'no doubt that the majority of the population indulge in it and find it lucrative', admitted one official.[652] As the price had continued to grow, so had the incentive to circumvent the fixed prices of the licensed European fisher-buyer-exporter UL Ltd. Fishers risked the perilous lake crossing to take dried fish to the fortnightly

[648] 'Record of a discussion held on the 23rd May in the Governors' office, Kampala', RHL, Mss.Afr.s.1425, Box 3, no. 8, F.I.
[649] UP, *ARPC 1947* (Entebbe, 1948), p. 78; UP, *ARGD 1947* (Entebbe, 1948), p. 44-45.
[650] Charles F. Hickling, Travel journal entry, 27 August 1946, RHL, MSS.Brit.Emp.s.520, Box 1 (4).
[651] UP, *ARPC 1947* (Entebbe, 1949), p. 86.
[652] UP, *ARPC 1947* (Entebbe, 1949), p. 75.

market at Mahagi Port, where there were at least ten independent buyers, whose prices always found a way to reach Bugungu. As the illegally-acquired proceeds of these fish were in Congolese francs, they had to be spent in situ on goods, like cigarettes, which came back to Uganda as contraband.[653]

Determining who had rights of access had grown more complex as the boom had continued. Identifying 'Alur' who arrived in Bugungu from Congo as opposed to West Nile was difficult enough. But increasingly the fishing rush had also brought men to Bugungu who saw themselves as Gungu: men not only from the upland settlement at Kitana-Kigorobya, but also from Congo and West Nile District.[654] Across the water such men had been born and grown up in Alur Lwo-speaking households with Alur mothers, amid a wider Alur context since 1909. When they departed for Bugungu, they left behind many others who were undergoing, or had already undergone, the time-honoured process of assimilating into littoral society across the water, or maintaining only certain practices that could be invoked as markers of distinction, like 'the exclusive form of dancing of the Mugongo [*sic*]'.[655] The younger interlopers found it difficult to pass as Gungu, not least because they had difficulties speaking Lugungu.[656] They had never been to Bugungu before.

In the absence of fisheries licensing rules and personnel, the office of the sub-county chief - coercively supported by police and court messengers - had ever-more significance in defining access rights and limiting infiltration. On the landing sites there were complaints about 'troublesome characters' among the

[653] UP, *ARGD 1947* (Entebbe, 1949), p. 42.
[654] 15/2/1950, BTB3.
[655] Lanning to Wachsmann, 15 February 1950, RHL MSS.Afr.s.1329 (7).
[656] Ints. Gungu 3b2, 22a, 23a.

new arrivals. Two such men were 'beaten' by a parish chief.[657] In Bugungu 'many people' began to agitate against Rwakaikara, leveling charges of chiefly misrule.[658] Different factions and lineages put forward different Gungu candidates. Mukukuusa was campaigning to revive the Bacwa Banyabyaara dynasty's control over Bugungu through the appointment of his son George, who was a parish chief at The Bagungu Location in Kitana-Kigorobya.[659]

But George had not convinced the colonial administration of his abilities.[660] With approval from the Mukama, the county chief in March 1948 appointed Erifaazi Gahwera Katongole as sub-county chief in Bugungu. It was a decision that found some favour in Bugungu. Born in Bugungu in about 1897, Erifaazi was the son of ex-parish chief and veteran campaigner Yubu '*Kyamkatuka*' Katongole. He was 'popular with his people', partly by virtue of being the son of such an influential individual. He enjoyed being back in a place where 'he was known' officials reported.[661] After being sent away for schooling during the lowlanders' period in exile, Erifazi had gone on to work in various positions as a colonial auxiliary, acquiring considerable experience at the rank of sub-county chief elsewhere in Bunyoro.[662]

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[657] 23.3.47, BTB2.
[658] J.W. Btajatyra (?), 'The report of Tour of Bujenje County from 6.3.1948 to 18/3/48', MDA, BOX 627..
[659] 23/3/47, BTB2.
[660] Mumyoka Bugahya to Mukwenda, 7 Oct. 1946, HDA, NAF.9.
[661] Int. Gungu 5a; 22/1/49, BTB2; Entry for Erifazi Gahwera Katongole in Chiefs Records Bujenje, n.d. (1953?), HDA.
[662] Beattie, *Nyoro State*, p. 206.

Reforming subjects: discipline and deflection, 1948-1949

Katongole's intimacy and identification with the people of Bugungu was a cause for discontentment among people from elsewhere. 'The clerk at Bugungu is not a Mugungu and asks for transfer to Bugahya as he does not agree with his master', noted one touring official.[663] But Katongole was unable to control the movement of fish or people in and out of Bugungu. Sunde had in 1948 left Lake Albert to invest in fishing nets manufacture in Kampala, but had been replaced by UL Ltd with a Cypriot trio. Working together as a firm called 'Kefreru', they operated a buying station located in Bugungu. Officially, exports reached a new high of 521 tons in 1948 – worth somewhere in the region of £32,649. But the real total was thought to be 'double' that amount. [664] In early 1949 there was evidence of a recent 'large influx' of people from the Congo into the shoreline, particularly in and around Ndandamire.[665]

But Katongole did seek to influence officials' opinions concerning this influx. He had in his sights the lake's first Fisheries Officer, Louis St. Clair Bartholomew, newly arrived in January 1949. In keeping with the departmental recruitment practice, Bartholomew was a military man – a Highland Light Infantry veteran of two world wars. Contrary to the Worthington plan's personnel specifications, he had no scientific training. But Bartholomew was not new to Bugungu. Given the state's erstwhile relationship with private fishing companies in Bugungu, it made perfect sense to hire the man who had led LAR Ltd's short-lived venture in the

[663] 'Report of the A.D.C.'s tour in Bujenje- 12/1/49 – 22/1/49', MDA, BOX 627.
[664] UP, *ARGD 1949* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 41; UP, *ARPC 1949* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 93; UP, *ARGD 1948* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 41.
[665] 21/1/49, BTB2.

mid-1930s.[666] He arrived with ample preconceived concerns about the state of the fisheries, still believing that the catching of 'absurdly immature' fish in seine nets was wreaking 'havoc' with stocks.[667]

Figure 29: B.G. Kinloch, 'The late Mr. L. St. C. Bartholomew, Fisheries Officer, Lake Albert' (n.d. but c. 1950).[668]

But Bartholomew had not immediately castigated the Congo and West Nile Alur. They made 'good fishermen', he argued, as they were 'on the whole of better physique and harder working'.[669] His first major activity on Lake Albert's shoreline in early 1949 was to count the numbers of fishermen and fishing camps, and the types of fishing gear. Breaking down these numbers by territorial or 'tribal' categories, Bartholomew's data revealed that of the 68 seine-net fishing

[666] A. Harrison, 'Louis St Clair Bartholomew', *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* 25 (1953), pp. 170-172.
[667] UP, *ARGD 1935* (Entebbe, 1935), p. 51.
[668] UP, *ARGD* 1952 (Entebbe, 1953), plate XXX.
[669] UP, *ARGD 1949* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 42; UP, *ARPC 1949* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 99.

camps in Bugungu, 40 were owned by Alur from Congo, and two by Alur/Jonam from West Nile District. Of 657 labourers employed across these 68 camps, there were 404 Congo Alur and 64 West Nile Alur. Only in the less labour-intensive gill net fisheries, which were much fewer in number, did the Gungu fishermen dominate.[670]

In their representations to Bartholomew and his colleagues, Katongole and other Gungu spokesmen sought to subvert the ethno-civilisational hierarchies that denigrated the people of Bugungu, by appropriating exactly the same language of 'wildness' used by colonial officials with reference to themselves. Katongole blamed the Alur for everything that the colonial state sought to curtail: smuggling; acting as proxies for non-African capital; evading tax; disobeying chiefs; and hunting wildlife. Officials came away assured that it was the outsiders, not the Gungu, who were 'generally making a nuisance of themselves'. 'These people seem to think that they are a law unto themselves', reported one officer, . 'Obviously these people must behave as law abiding citizens or go'.[671]

Katongole also adopted the violent tactics of the colonial state. Officials had been rather non-committal about how to bring the Alur population under control. District administrators even floated the idea of appointing an 'Aluru Mutongole Chief' as a 'separate ruler for these people' in the parish of Ndandamire where the 'immigrant Aluru' made up a large proportion of the 500-strong population. But Katongole treated the Alur as the colonial state had treated the Gungu. Katongole had 'already burnt several homes of the culprits concerned', when a touring

[670] UP, *ARGD 1949* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 45.
[671] 21/1/49 & 31/1/49, BTB2.

officer investigated the situation at the end of January 1949.[672] But official support for Katongole's general approach was rather shaky. Administrators were disgusted by one particularly gruesome episode in the lowlands that occurred later that year, when seven Gungu men had tied a woman accused of *burogo,* or sorcery, to a tree and beaten her, causing 'severe bodily harm'; Katongole had let them off with 'only small fines', to the disappointment of British officials who had been alerted to this 'bad affair'.[673]

Gungu sought to deflect blame for the breakdown of fish marketing arrangements. The public utility Uganda Fish Marketing Corporation (Tufmac) established itself indirectly in Bugungu at around the turn of 1949.[674] Kefreru reached a concession agreement with Tufmac in order to continue to operate on Lake Albert. Though the Tufmac concession permitted Kefreru only to trade, the latter were to benefit from legal restrictions designed to compel the African fishers to sell to them exclusively. To further encourage compliance the administration stopped offering the currency exchange service in Butiaba. But the Tufmac-Kefreru arrangement soon ran into trouble. No longer at liberty to anchor their trade in their own catches, Kefreru foundered. Following a 'somewhat chequered' record when it came price disputes with local fishers, Kefreru stopped buying fish altogether in June. In September 1949 the final remaining member of Kefreru left Bugungu, leaving a trail of unpaid bills to labourers and fishers. With no large-scale licenced fish traders active, the embarrassed administration was forced to

[672] 21/1/49 & 31/1/49, BTB2; 'Report of the A.D.C.'s tour in Bujenje- 12/1/49 – 22/1/49', MDA, BOX 627.
[673] 15.9.49, BTB2; Nyakatura to Katikiro, 26 September 1949, MDA, BOX 627.
[674] UP, *ARGD 1948* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 41.

permit fishermen to export their fish directly to Mahagi Port and to exchange francs at Butiaba, while Tufmac resolved to engage directly with fish marketing.[675]

Certain people in Bugungu made clear the source of the problem. Katongole's superior, the Bujenje county chief, wrote to Katikiro about the situation. The letter, as was reported elsewhere, suggested 'that Congo natives are fishing in the Uganda waters to the detriment of the local fishermen'.[676] Gungu fishers were suffering as a result of the increased competition for fish, and the possibility of attracting fish buyers was reduced by the fact that European-backed seine net camps were taking their fish, caught in Uganda waters, to their masters at Mahagi Port.

The authorities' acts of collective punishment by means of withholding services intensified in 1948-1949. District officials recognised the road to be 'the exception' among the Native Administration's otherwise 'good' roads, but long-overdue essential investment continued to be withheld unless 'they start the work themselves'.[677] The Game Department increasingly withdrew the game guards who were protecting people against the rapidly proliferating elephant population as a blanket punishment for hunting.[678] Newly appointed Game Ranger John Mills, a former captain in the Welsh Fusiliers, increasingly saw his role as laying the groundwork for 'Murchison Falls National Park', as Bunyoro and Gulu Game Reserve looked likely to be reconstituted. Governor Hall had in late 1948 appointed a committee to consider and make recommendations on national parks,

[675] 15/9/49 & 19/9/49, BTB2; UP, *ARPC 1949* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 91.
[676] Bartholomew, 'Report for November 1949', 30 November 1949, HDA, GAM.6.
[677] 15/9/49, BTB2.
[678] 'Report of the A.D.C.'s tour in Bujenje- 12/1/49 – 22/1/49', MDA, BOX 627; 14.3.48 & 31/1/49, & 15/9/49, BTB2; UP, *ARPC 1949* (Entebbe, 1950), p. 97.

at the Colonial Secretary's suggestion.[679] As officials heaped pressure on the Mukama to end the hunting, in a meeting in October 1949 at the Sub-County Headquarters in Buliisa he made statements in which he threatened to go even further than simply continuing to withhold protection. With 'very many people' in attendance the Mukama had summoned the deeply unsettling spectre of 1909, by stating that 'they might be shifted and taken elsewhere'. These words had made people 'very worried', reported the county chief.[680]

The people of Bugungu sought to represent themselves as reformed subjects in contrast to the interlopers in order to deflect this collectivising violence. In an effort to convince the Game Department to send a Game Scout to shoot crop-raiders, eight men from the riverside areas of Ndandamire and Bukindwa 'promised to guard' the routes used by canoes to access the Sleeping Sickness Area for hunting.[681] At least in the short-term, this had a salutary impact on levels of hunting in Bugungu.[682] A fresh start was promised in regard to the fishing industry, as Tufmac had arrived around the turn of the year, intending to intervene between the fishers and Mahagi Port's 'unreliable Greeks' by buying fish from Bugungu.[683]

But Bugungu was also coming under close scrutiny. Soon the Tufmac general manager complained that the fishers did not understand the function of the company; he was being brought bad fish, and Bugungu was 'the only place where

[679] Creech Jones to Hall, 10 June 1948. UKNA, CO 847/40/2; 'No.106 of 1948: National parks in Uganda', UKNA, FCO 141/18051.
[680] Nyakatura to Katikiro, 8 October 1949, MDA, BOX 627.
[681] Bahoire, 'Akukiiri'; Nyakatura to Katikiro, 8 October 1949, MDA, BOX 627; 15.9.49, BTB2.
[682] J.R.F. Mills Diary, 23 Nov 1949, JMP.
[683] Bartholomew, 'Report for July 1950', 17 August 1950, HDA, GAM.6.

he is experiencing this trouble'.[684] The new Game Warden Bruce Kinloch, obsessed with the 'evils' of snares made of wire cable, heard reports of renewed poaching at this time.[685] Katongole increasing disappointed British officials at this time. He admitted to a touring district official in March 1950 that neither he nor the county chief were 'aware of what actually constitutes an offence against the [Game] [O]rdinance'.[686] Unable or unwilling to get to grips with the situation. Katongole was transferred away from Bugungu in April 1950. British officials report signs of improvement under his replacement, Yoronimu Rugongeza from the plateau who took a 'sterner' approach to poaching; yet Kinloch still refused to post a Game Guard to Bugungu. [687]

Licensing violence: Congo kidemu, 1950-1951

As an outsider himself, Rugongeza did not share his predecessor's acute concern over the presence of non-Gungu fishers. But Fisheries Officer Bartholomew had come to combine these preoccupations with his more deep-rooted views regarding ecological crisis over the course of 1949, though only from the middle of 1950 did he feel compelled to act. By this time it became clear that Tufmac had failed. The government had been forced to revoke Tufmac's exclusive buying licence, leaving the fishers 'anxious' for a local market. The reasons for this collapse were many. Disagreements between Tufmac and the fishers in Bugungu reflected fundamental tensions within the corporation. Bartholomew had urged the company to bear with Bugungu's fishers, but the general manager was more

[684] 20.3.50, BTB3.
[685] UP, *ARGFD 1950* (Entebbe, 1951), p. 9; J.R.F. Mills diary, 15 February 1950, JMP.
[686] 20.3.50, BTB3.
[687] Bartholomew, 'Report for April 1950', 24 April 1950, HDA, GAM. 6; 9.8.50, BTB3.

concerned by the requirement 'to make money for the shareholders'.[688] Their dividends had priority over any wider public mission under the corporation's rules.[689] The story of Tufmac was also 'a sad one of mismanagement and extravagance'.[690] When rains rendered the Bugungu road impassable, relations rapidly deteriorated as Tufmac was forced to suspend marketing operations while awaiting a launch for water transportation which the company had not ordered in time. Bartholomew rued the fact that the government had 'so closely identified' with the company, and had 'lost face' as a result.[691]

But Bartholomew believed that Congo Africans had also played a part in this ignominious collapse and the wider, worsening crisis. Efforts to keep up with the demands from settler-owned enterprises in the Congo were increasingly propelling foreign interests into Uganda's waters. He accepted that some of the Africans had come to Uganda of their own accord, but maintained that 'their success does not bring any prosperity to this country' as they smuggled their catches to back to Congo. Several of the seine nets used by those from Congo were about 600 metres long – much longer and therefore much more 'destructive' than those owned locally. The catches had 'fallen off badly'; and the area was left 'badly overfished'. Fishing with increasing intensity, these operations were 'taking the fish from the local fishermen'. They were serving to 'squeeze out' even the seine-owning Gungu fishermen with nets of 60-100 yards, who found their operations

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[688] J.L. Leyden, "Development progress in Uganda', 8 December 1952, UKNA CO 822/324.
[689] Bartholomew, 'Report for July 1950', 17 August 1950, HDA, GAM.6; UP, *Progress in Uganda 1948* (Entebbe, 1949), p. 10.
[690] J.L. Leyden, "Development progress in Uganda', 8 December 1952, UKNA CO 822/324.
[691] Bartholomew, 'Report for May 1950', 5 June 1950, HDA, GAM.6; Bartholomew, 'Report for June 1950', 1 July 1950, HDA, GAM.6; UP, *ARPC 1950* (Entebbe, 1951), p. 99; UP, *ARGD 1949* (Entebbe 1950), p. 48.

'no longer an economic proposition'. Incontrovertible evidence of European involvement was difficult to obtain. But Bartholomew deemed it 'impossible' for capital to have been provided by 'the local African' – even a rich one – as such nets cost an estimated £500 or more each.[692] The situation was also generating 'considerable feeling against' the South Asian-owned *duka*s whose opening hours for sale of maize meal were allegedly geared towards 'nocturnal trade with foreigners' while 'frequently refusing to sell to Bagungu in the daytime'.[693]

At Bartholomew's request in July 1950, the Game Warden Kinloch launched efforts to set the legislative wheels in motion for canoe licensing through the application of the Fishing Rules of 1948 to Lake Albert.[694] Keen to mend relations between the government and the fishers, Bartholomew had revised his proposals in a manner that rendered the sub-county chief even more powerful. He initially suggested that three consecutive Poll Tax payments would render Congo Africans eligible for registration.[695] But he had learnt that some camps working at the bidding of European interests had been established for longer than three years. Convinced that the Greeks would 'try to find some way round the regulations' by offering inducements, Bartholomew determined that in order 'to weed out' the Euro-Congolese operations it was best not to be tied to a fixed qualifying period, and to insist that canoe licences stipulated a 250 yard limit on seine nets. Under these proposals, the sub-county chief's power to determine fishers' access to the riches of Bugungu was to be formalised and reinforced. This chief would sift

[692] Bartholomew, 'Registration of fishing vessels, Lake Albert', 14 August 1950, HDA, GAM.6; Bartholomew, 'Report for June 1950', 1 July 1950, HDA, GAM.6.
[693] 9.8.50, BTB3.
[694] Kinloch to CS, 18 July 1950, HDA, GAM.6.
[695] Kinloch to Bartholomew, 18 July 1950, HDA, GAM.6

through applications, creating 'lists of those who are, and those who are not, bona fide local residents'.[696]

British officials' interventions in the Lake Albert fisheries had the effect of defining fishing rights along ethnic lines. Bugungu's fishers were told that 'the Bagungu' were only permitted to lend their canoes to fishermen 'of their own tribe'. Canoes lent 'to Congo or other outsider fishermen' would be confiscated, and their owners punished. The explicit rationale behind these legal changes was the need 'to protect the interests of the Banyoro and Bagungu fishermen', as the DC Bunyoro put it.[697] Licences to fish off the Bunyoro coastline, the PC Western Province recommended, would only be granted to 'natives of Bunyoro' and the 'number of Baganda' who were already established there. Upland men showed almost no interest in Bugungu's fisheries. The very small number of Ganda fishers active there were the principal casualties of the imposition of limits on the number of gill nets per licence-holder.[698]

'The whole object is to assist and protect the local native', claimed Bartholomew in regard to the ordinance.[699] But the ordinance was just one part of a disciplinary pincer movement from Kinloch's department. As the Game Warden saw it, the ordinance would 'assist in the control of game poaching up the Victoria Nile'.[700] The delta area and riverbanks within the Sleeping Sickness Area were home to fishing and hunting camps, supplied with maize meal by the 'many plots of

[696] Bartholomew, 'Registration of fishing vessels, Lake Albert', 14 August 1950, HDA, GAM.6.
[697] DC Bunyoro to PCWP, 26 September 1950, HDA, GAM.6.
[698] Bartholomew, 'Report for January 1951', 12 February 1951, HDA, GAM.6.
[699] Bartholomew, 'Registration of fishing vessels, Lake Albert', 14 August 1950, HDA, GAM.6.
[700] Kinloch to CS, 18 July 1950, HDA, GAM.6.

cultivation', which had sprung up in the fertile soils.[701] The chiefs hounded the poor fishers out of their camps on the lakeward side of the Victoria Nile delta in July 1950. But all those who remained were publicly warned by the Mukama in August that they were 'to move out' by the end of the year – before the January 1951 licensing process – on pain of having their houses and gardens burnt, and their canoes and grain confiscated.[702] As the game officials believed that 'good progress' had been made to this end later in the year, they provided the area with a guard.[703] But demands for another, in the hinterland cotton-growing area of Bugana, were met with the timeworn transactional offering; a game guard would be provided only 'if they stop poaching' and not in 'outlying' areas where 'they must protect themselves'.[704]

With people beginning to move away from the forbidden littoral zones that had become the 'chief source of food' for labourers, 'a serious shortage of food' threatened. But the district administration quickly tried to turn anticipated hardship to further disciplinary advantage. Aside from the illegal maize gardens, Bugungu's residents had largely rejected directions to become 'self-supporting'. Despite the general unsuitability of the soil, and the threat posed by crop-raiding elephants, the government deprecated the importation of Congo maize flour used by the fishermen. But administrators believed that the shortages that this would create would 'make the Bagungu cultivate more' in permitted zones, and planned to press for an Agricultural Instructor to be sent to assist.[705]

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[701] Bartholomew, 'Report for April 1950', 24 April 1950, HDA, GAM.6.
[702] 9.8.50, BTB3.
[703] UP, *ARGFD 1950* (Entebbe, 1951), p. 10.
[704] 7.11.50, BTB3.
[705] 15/9/49, BTB2; 20.3.50, 9.11.50 & 9.8.50, BTB3.

The licensing of 223 canoes in Bugungu in the January forced the departure of most of the Congo Alur not content to remain as mere seine-net porters. Gungu fishers continued their project of reputational reinvention and ethno-civilisational contestation. These men greeted the announcing of licensing with 'cheers and expressions of thanks', and offered to serve voluntarily in an informal policing capacity, by forming themselves into what Bartholomew termed 'a sort of "Watch Committee"' to provide him with information about any 'undesirable' foreigners seeking to encroach on their fishing grounds.[706] To be civilised was to appropriate the discourses and practices of the civilisers.

The Congo fishermen 'naturally did not like the proceeding so well', remarked Bartholomew on the registration process, with some understatement. The antagonism generated between the Protectorate's subjects was also quick to manifest itself. Bartholomew received reports that departing Congo Alur took revenge against the triumphalist Gungu fishermen: leaving Bugungu without paying their debts, taking their hosts' canoes with them, and threatening violence if the Gungu came to Mahagi. The Alur/Jonam of Panyamur locality attempted 'to keep Bagungu out' by resurrecting a moribund sleeping sickness regulation prohibiting movement between Bunyoro and West Nile.[707]

But a more violent collectivising punishment from Bartholomew was forthcoming. The new regulations failed to deter all of the Congo Alur. Several 'Bacongo' fishermen were reported to still remained in Bugungu, or to have returned there, in order to fish 'surreptitiously'. Others had returned, and were now 'hanging

[706] Bartholomew, 'Report for November, 1950', 5 December 1950, HDA, GAM.6. Bartholomew, 'Report for January 1951', 12 February 1951, HDA, GAM.6.
[707] Bartholomew, 'Report for January 1951', 12 February 1951, HDA, GAM.6.

about the shore', and waiting for 'the good time coming in the form of licences for all'; they had even 'won' the sub-county and county chiefs 'to their way of thinking'. With responsibility for issuing fishing licences due to handed over from the ADC to the sub-county chief, Bartholomew declared in his April 1951 report that 'the time has now come to take a strong line with the Congo men here'. Bartholomew resorted to sudden violent coercion: in May 1951, he attempted to ensure that the shoreline was 'cleaned up', by launching a 'raid' on the 'badhats' in a departmental Land Rover. Bartholomew even considering expelling all Congolese porters as a precaution, until he realised that not only could he not prevent porters from assisting in landing seine net hauls, he could not even keep them out of the canoes of Gungu gill-net fishermen without 'doing serious damage to the fishing industry'. But he remained alert to the risk of 'Congo opportunism' through 'undercover arrangements' between 'Congo "porters"' and 'genuine local inhabitants'. [708]

This 'raid' was to be one of Bartholomew's final official acts as fisheries officer; he fell seriously ill soon afterwards, spending April to October 1951 on leave before being sent back to Scotland where he passed away a year later.[709] His violent intervention sent shockwaves through the Northern Albertine Rift, exacerbating inter-communal strains. Congo Alur in the Mahagi market refused to sell Gungu fishermen the cassava flour they required to feed their porters.[710] Tensions between Congo Alurs and West Nile's Alur/Jonam were reported soon after near

[708] Bartholomew, 'Report for April, 1951', 12 May 1951, HDA, GAM.6; Bartholomew, 'Report for May 1951', 30 June 1951, HDA, GAM.6; Bartholomew, 'Report for May 1951', 30 June 1951, HDA, GAM.6.
[709] 'Obituary: L. Bartholomew', *Uganda Herald*, 15 November 1952.
[710] Bartholomew, 'Report for May 1951', 30 June 1951, HDA, GAM.6.

the Uganda-Congo frontier.[711] But licensing measures to keep out the 'hordes', as Kinloch termed them, were to be maintained.[712]

Disorder resumes, c.1951-c.1952

The departure of the Congo bosses left nobody for the colonial authorities to blame, stigmatise, and punish but the Gungu themselves. Problems mounted about the game reserve status, the lack of accessible land that it appeared to entail, and the need for protection from elephants, which were responsible for a series of deaths, and buffalo, which transmitted cattle diseases.[713] For outbreaks of trympanosomiasis and anthrax cattle disease, officials pointed the finger at the lowlanders for keeping their cattle on the road, and using the meat and hides of animals found dead.[714]

Bugungu could not be trusted when it came to game, according to officials. Bugungu's poaching proclivities were in 1951 less evident, it seemed, as no cases were brought before the court. But district officials maintained that 'the pathological need' for meat and the 'considerable profit' it offered—remained 'very strong'. Administrators assumed that the 'malefactors', particularly buffalo-hunters, had a 'collusive' relationship with chiefs and other inhabitants who had 'a personal interest in shielding them'.[715] Game policy in Bugungu was increasingly tied to Kinloch's unrelenting crusade to force the Protectorate government to immediately establish the national parks. Following the completion of the report by the Parks Committee in 1951, the government had

[711] Bartholomew, 'Report for April, 1951', 12 May 1951, HDA, GAM.6.
[712] UP, *ARGFD 1953* (Entebbe, 1954), p. 79.
[713] DC Hoima to ADC Masindi, 8 February 1952, HDA, GAM.3.
[714] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District for 1951', 1952, HDA.
[715] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District for 1951', 1952, HDA.

decided on further investigations into the matter by Ken Beaton, the Senior Warden of the Royal National Parks of Kenya.

The road remained a big problem, for fish marketing problems did not end with the departure of the Congo smugglers. No replacement for Tufmac was quickly forthcoming. The fish market at Mahagi Port could still be reached using the barges or the steamer from Butiaba, but the pressure of priority cargoes and the corrosive effect of salt on the interior of the barges increasingly meant the fishers were 'more or less compelled' to carry fish in their individual canoes.[716] From about September 1951, a slightly better alternative had briefly emerged on the Uganda side of north-western shore of Lake Albert, at a buying station at Panyimur in West Nile District run by a Greco-Belgian firm called *Société du Haut-Uélé et du Nil* (SHUN), under an agreement with Tufmac.[717] Fishers had for a while benefited from a 'price war' that broke out between SHUN and the Greek buyers at Mahagi Port.[718] But Panyimur still involved a treacherous journey by canoe. The high prices from 1951 did make buyers consider coming to Bugungu, but they were repelled by the 'flooded and impassable' road.[719] District officials claimed they were only willing to improve the road if SHUN committed to making regular visits to Bugungu. In reality, the district administration knew this to be an empty offer; the buyers would be unwilling to commit long-term due to fluctuations in the prices.[720] Officials readily blamed the lowlanders. Problems

[716] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District for 1952', 1953, HDA.
[717] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District for 1951', 1952, HDA.
[718] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District for 1951', 1952, HDA; UP, *ARGFD 1951* (Entebbe, 1952), p. 54.
[719] 26.5.51, BTB3.
[720] DC Bunyoro to Regional Director of Customs, 12 November 1951, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2.

over fish marketing were owing to fishers 'independent nature' which mean they tended 'to flit from place to place in search of the highest prices'.[721]

The authorities meted out the customary collectivising punishments. Kinloch's suspicions made him attempt to blunt the efficaciousness of Game Guards. Chiefs had been further deterred from instructing Game Guards to shoot crop-raiding elephants, as Kinloch insisted they be made 'to justify in writing' these requests.[722] Instead of investing in the road and helping to connect fishers with buyers, officials continued to demand local self-help.[723] The new sub-county chief who arrived in 1952 was Masindi's Yosiya Baligonzaki, a former policeman who was 'fond of having his people lashed'.[724]

When CMS Kisansya Primary School was rebuilt in 1952, one touring officer marvelled: 'now a joy to behold. Best thing that the Bagungu have ever done'.[725] It was a rather backhanded compliment. The population were still far from the ideal subjects the late colonial state was seeking to mould. Officials found Bugungu rather too self-willed to conform to growing expectations for Africans to demonstrate 'self-help'.[726] 'These people simply are not improving their living conditions despite their wealth'.[727]

[721] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro, 1952', 1953, HDA; UP, *ARPC 1952* (Entebbe, 1953), p. 101.
[722] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District for 1951', 1952, HDA.
[723] 20.3.50, 9.11.50 & 26.5.51, BTB3.
[724] 6.7.53, BTB2.
[725] 4.7.52, BTB3.
[726] 29.11.52, BTB3.
[727] 29.11.52, BTB3.

Conclusion

A dozen or so years of highly localised and largely unsupervised accumulation and infiltration had retransformed Bugungu into a site of unsettling ironies and dangerous wildness in Nyoro-Gahya and colonial eyes, catalysing disciplinary initiatives of an intensity not seen since 1909. Techniques of governance in this period involved less cajolement, more open compulsion through collectivising punishments. But a coalition of lowland chiefs and emerging capitalists increasingly sought to inscribe difference and hierarchy amid the confusion, enlisting classificatory violence in their struggles over accumulation and autonomy.As such, these figures aimed to deflect and appropriate the insulting ethno-civilisationalist images and increasingly overbearing practices of Nyoro-Gahya sub-colonials and militarist colonial officials in order to relegate others as barbarians. The demonstration of instrumental, coercive power in a series of interventions by the state at the turn of the 1950s served as a reminder that violent spectacle remained essential to the constitution and projection of state authority in Bugungu, even if its victims had changed.

CHAPTER SIX: *Between 'darkness' and 'light': extinction, extortion and excess in late colonial Bugungu, c.1952-1961*

'previous policy appears possibly unjust & excessively obstructive to a fairly progressive people'. [728]

A new, self-conscious social group of young literate men used the burgeoning vernacular press and written petitions to the government to engage with the discourses and practices of ethno-civilisationalism in the 1950s. In a time of rapidly developing political opportunities associated with the democratisation of local government in Bunyoro, these figures laid claim to political and moral leadership. Some burnished their reputations by leading a backlash against the harsh differential and differentiating culture of punishment and the degrading stereotypes ideas that provided its discursive underpinnings; others, by contrast, turned the ethno-civilisationalist gaze and corresponding disciplinary impulses inward on a society strained by unprecedented social change. The 'hordes' from outside Bugungu had been disciplined and degraded through law and coercive force at the bidding of an older generation of chiefs and fisher-entrepreneurs at the turn of the decade; but, in the eyes of both officials and Gungu readers, barbarians remained within.

[728] 12.7.54, BTB2.

'[T]he consequences of their misbehaviour': c.1952-1954

Bugungu experienced further powerful social and economic shifts in 1952-1954. After a year of 'violently fluctuating' prices in 1952, Mahagi Port market prices began a secular decline in 1953.[729] At Mahagi fishermen endured an increasingly severe system of inspection and condemnation. Poorly dried catches were vulnerable to being rejected or offered lower prices.[730] Several of these men had in 1954 organised themselves into a co-operative Fishing Society called Katuhikeyo – from *kuhikaniza*, meaning 'to concur with each other' – to buy salt and nets in bulk at better prices. But no buyers visited Bugungu owing to the state of the road.[731] Domestic demand for Bugungu's salted fish remained very low as the 'traditional taboo on the eating of fish' on the plateau in Bunyoro was 'only just beginning to disappear'.[732] But it remained impossible to stimulate such demand through supply, as the state of the road rendered the cost of transport 'absurdly high'.[733] Bartholomew's successor as Fisheries Officer believed they had 'little to fear from overfishing'.[734]

Alternative livelihoods, particularly among poorer inland lowlanders, were being attempted. Production of cotton was expanded by farmers who formed co-operative societies such as the Byamani Cotton Society based around the growing cotton hub at Bugana in the south-eastern hinterland of the sub-county, to market this cash crop to buyers from the plateau at a time of favourable prices. Officials

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[729] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District 1952', 1953, HDA; UP, *ARPC 1953* (Entebbe, 1954), p. 101.
[730] 14.5.54, BTB3.
[731] 22.11.52, BTB3; DC Bunyoro to General Manager SHUN, 19 December 1952, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2.
[732] UP, *ARPC 1952* (Entebbe, 1953), p. 101; UP, *ARPC 1953* (Entebbe, 1954), pp. 76-77.
[733] UP, ARGFD 1952 (Entebbe, 1953), p. 60.
[734] Game Warden to PCWP, 29 September 1953, HDA, GAM.6.

noted a 'big increase' in cotton cultivation at the start of the decade, with prices on the rise.[735] Transport of their crop by water was rendered costly due to the labour required for repeated off-loading and loading, and the limited cargo-loading capacity of the landing pier. But the road presented formidable obstacle to efficient transportation of their crop to ginneries.[736] It had become necessary to construct temporary bridges from wooden poles during the dry season to enable lorries to transport the cotton crop out of the district.[737]

People increasingly began to look above the escarpment for other, new opportunities. By this time, the sub-county's two primary schools were oversubscribed for the first time owing to concerted propaganda from authorities, the successes of the few who had gone to school, and the passing or mellowing of some of the churches' staunchest opponents.[738] Kisansya and Ndandamire became full primary schools, and over the next few years a few Anglican 'bush schools' began to receive government assistance. New sources of financial support for education in the junior and senior secondary schools on the plateau appeared in the form of bursaries or scholarships from the church, Bunyoro Local Government, and the British American Tobacco corporation, which students from Bugungu received following top performances in district-wide examinations.

Getting students to higher schools, and fish and cotton to market required investment in, among other things, the road.[739] But the Native Government instead adopted a tough fiscal policy in regard to Bugungu. In mid-1953, the Bunyoro

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[735] 'Highest price ever for cotton', *Uganda Herald,* 22 October 1954.
[736] 15.5.54, BTB3.
[737] Walter Bazley, *Bunyoro, tropical paradox* (Edinburgh, 1993), p. 59.
[738] 20.3.50, BTB3; Int.Gung u15a; Bazley, *Bunyoro*, pp. 55-56.
[739] 15.5.54, BTB3.

District Council had voted to introduce graduated taxation in Bunyoro with a top rate higher than any other district.[740] Although this tax was haphazardly implemented elsewhere in Bunyoro, the Katikiro in 1954 insisted that all canoe-owners automatically paid the top rate.[741] As the Fisheries Officer argued, the tax hit the more 'industrious' fishers hardest, and failed to take into account the difficulty of assessing the income earned in Mahagi market, owing to its volatility.[742]

Such an approach from the Nyoro ruling elite was mirrored in the intensification of the culture of extortive, collective punishment. Officials had given up helping the fishers, claiming to have arranged with fishermen to sell to buyers coming from Kampala, only for the men from Bugungu to instead opt to take their catches to Congo to take advantage of temporarily high prices.[743] The road at any rate 'more or less cut Bugungu off from regular administration and supervision by departments'.[744] But this infrastructure was increasingly the object and subject of a disciplinary project. Efforts to induce the residents to provide labour for road maintenance were unsuccessful: 'it is immaterial to them whether or not they receive their pay (...) as they are so wealthy', bemoaned the DC Bunyoro. Instead of advocating for funds to improve the road, however, district administrators took to 'raising hell with the Bagungu'. In an effort to 'goad the Bagungu into putting the road to rights', officials requested cotton buyers not to visit Bugungu by boat,

[740] Doyle, *Crisis*, p. 173.
[741] 28.9.54 & 12.2.57, BTB3.
[742]. Anderson to DC Bunyoro, 15 July 1953, HDA, ADM.5(?).
[743] 15.2.53; UP, *PCAR 1954* (Entebbe, 1955), p. 74.
[744] 'Visit of His excellency the Governor to Bunyoro, January 15th 1955', 1955, HDA, ADM 15/3.

and threatened to withhold investment in boreholes for the hinterland.[745] Realising there were limits to what the lowlanders could or were willing to achieve in this regard, the Bunyoro Local Government in early 1953 installed a pontoon bridge over the most troublesome river, the Waiga. But the road was closed to motor traffic within a few months as the pontoon was looted of all its materials.[746] When the lowlanders failed to identify the culprits, the DC petulantly refused to devote any more resources to the road, leaving it impassable.[747]

The Game and Fisheries Department continued to try to compel obedience in 1953-1954. Under pressure from Game Warden Kinloch, the white settler press, and the SPFE's successor organisation, the Fauna Preservation Society, the new Governor Andrew Cohen's administration in March 1952 put forward a National Parks Bill for converting the Bunyoro-Gulu and Toro game reserves into Murchison Falls National Park and Kazinga National Park respectively.[748] But the acquiescence of Bunyoro District Council – dominated by chiefs and the Mukama -- was largely secured through the offer of ten per cent share of all park entrance fees for the Bunyoro Government.[749] But another concession had been obtained. The Protectorate promised to abolish Bugungu's encompassing game reserve and enclosing Sleeping Sickness Area, with the park boundary's location declared in July 1952 serving to increase the area open to settlement by a third. The

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[745] DC Bunyoro to Provincial Agricultural Officer, 19 January 1953, MDA, AGR.3/COT.2;
[746]13.2.53, 6.7.53 & 17.10.53, BTB3.
[747] 14.5.54, 29.9.54, 8.5.55, & 22.10.55, BTB3.
[748] Anon., 'Uganda flouts world opinion', *Uganda Herald,* 19 February 1952.
[749] Ex.Co.(52)13, 'National Parks in Uganda', 18 February 1952, UKNA, FCO 141/18057; Bere to Allen, 1 April 1952, GDA; 'Governor visits Bunyoro', *Uganda Herald,* 8 March 1952; Ex.Co.(52)37, 'National Parks: Inducement to African Local Governments, 6 May 1952, UKNA, FCO 141/18057; Bunyoro District Council, 'Memorandum on the Land & General Future Policy in Bunyoro', April 1953, ICS, ICS29/1/3/15.

boundary's significance had been impressed upon the population by disagreements during visits from officials, councillors, and surveyors.[750] What had not been publicised greatly was the government's intention to replace the loathed game reserve status with another, albeit newly contrived, protected status: 'Elephant and Hippopotamus Sanctuary'. Its implications from the colonial perspective were minimal: it meant that elephant and hippopotamus could be killed in defence of life and crops, but not hunted on a licence.[751]

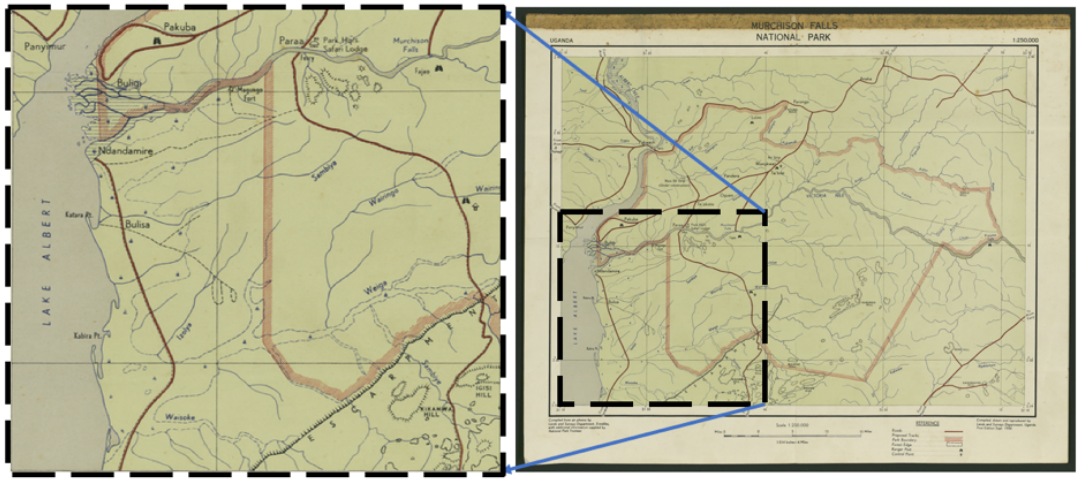

Figure 30: The south-western boundary between Murchison Falls National Park and the Bugungu Elephant and Hippopotamus Sanctuary (1952).

But Game Reserve abolition and Sanctuary creation were left in abeyance by the newly constituted parastatal Uganda National Parks (UNP) organisation. The park boundary required physical demarcation, which was to be costly and time-

[750] Kosya Bahoire, 'Akukiiri Akukuutisya Gwokweti', KBP. The Standing Committee demanded that the north-eastern limit of the boundary be extended all the way to Pajao, doubling the area open for settlement by excising the entire lowland area that had once constituted the pre-colonial *saza* of Bugungu. DC Bunyoro to Cartland, 29 May 1952, HDA, GAM.11. The colonial conservationists insisted on keeping as much of the Victoria Nile below Murchison Falls within the park as possible, envisaging the waterfall at Pajao as the centrepiece of the park – the ideal site for park headquarters, a campsite, and the terminus of the proposed road from Masindi. See K. Beaton, 'Report on the establishment of National Parks in Uganda', 27 December 1951, UKNA, CO 822/315.

[751] Ex.Co.(52)50, 'National Parks in Uganda', 27 May 1952, UKNA, FCO 141/18057.

consuming, especially owing to its deviation from physical features such as rivers. Further uncertainty had been produced by UNP's interest in amending this boundary in a way that took back more land for the park. The riverside territory coveted by UNP contained Fort Magungu. Former parks advisor Beaton, in his new role as Chief Warden, had in late 1952 earmarked this former Turco-Egyptian landing and outpost as an ideal base for the park headquarters. Imagining UNP's British personnel as legatees of celebrated imperial adventurers, Beaton considered this site of 'historical interest' to be 'a strategic position [from which] to control the south-western boundary [of the park]'. He also imagined it a perfect location from which to convey tourists to the Falls. These increasingly popular trips had hitherto run from Butiaba but were often suspended or interrupted by low water levels and storms on the lake.[752]

By mid-1954, the organisation had opted instead to develop a riverbank spot to the east of the fort at a location newly named by Lwo-speaking park staff as 'Paraa', meaning 'Place of the hippo'. But Fort Magungu still formed part of UNP's plans, which were pursued after Beaton's sudden death in October 1954. UNP argued that the boundary should still be adjusted to protect not only this 'historic site', but also crocodiles, which had been threatened by an upsurge in poaching in response to growing demand for their skins.[753] The DC Bunyoro approached the Mukama to consult the District Council over this 'small alteration' to the boundary, offering, in exchange, to excise from the park a piece of land of equal area in Bunyoro's north-east. The official maintained that there was no cultivation

[752] UP, *ARGD* 1950 (Entebbe, 1951), p. 60; UP, *ARGFD 1953* (Entebbe, 1954), p. 56.
[753] UP, *ARGFD 1953* (Entebbe, 1954), pp. 78-79.

in the vicinity of Fort Magungu, and the nearest house was approximately three miles from this new proposed boundary.[754]

The Mukama delayed on making a decision. In the meantime, game officials maintained a policy of withholding protection by game guards from the Game Reserve until poaching – carried out 'almost with impunity' – was brought under control. The Game Ranger argued that Bugungu's inhabitants needed to 'accept, with good grace' the 'consequences of their misbehaviour'.[755] The consequences were severe. Incursions by a herd of 600 elephants over the course of several months in 1954 left a trail of destruction: human fatalities, mature cassava crops 'devastated' and cotton 'badly trampled', and the closing of Bugana Primary School in central-eastern Bugungu.[756]

Reformers, readers, and rumours, 1954-1955

But reactions against impositions, neglect, and stigmatisation were growing among the wider population. They made known their discontent initially by means of an old strategy – destroying government property, such as the cattle innoculation crushes, and the highly flammable grass-thatched buildings of the chief Baligonzaki and medical dresser's house.[757] But new approaches and opportunities for protest arose in Bunyoro's much changed politics. In late 1953 Uganda experienced shockwaves when Cohen deported the intransigent Kabaka of Buganda and the Legislative Council accepted the Wallis enquiry's recommendations for the adoption of a system of elected district councils that

[754] Gower to the Mukama, 6 July 1954, HDA, GAM.11.
[755] Game Ranger to Agricultural Officer (Hoima), 3 March 1954, HDA, GAM.3.
[756] 12.7.54, & 29.9.54, BTB3.
[757] 19.11.52, 22.11.52, BTB3; UP, *PCAR 1953* (Entebbe, 1954), p. 95.

would assume responsibility for local government. Few men from Bunyoro had joined the first semi-effective nationalist party, the Uganda National Congress, owing to its origins in Buganda, but now, among 'the more educated class', 'political thought and discussion' had been stimulated by developments there. Over the course of 1954, public discontent was growing. The cost of maintaining the Mukama, the 'unfettered' nature of the power he exercised, and the unsuitability, incompetence and corruption of chiefs he selected had emboldened the Council's committees to resist his will for the first time.[758]

The Mukama's fate was sealed in the August 1954 due to the outcomes of meetings between a Council-appointed committee and a British advisor on constitutional affairs, Keith Hancock, who had come to Uganda primarily to address Buganda's relationship with the Protectorate Government. The 14-man 'Bunyoro Hancock Committee' was dominated by 'new men' with the equivalent of at least senior secondary education. Expressing, in Hancock's words, 'very strong opinions', the Committee came out 'unanimously in favour of very radical constitutional change'.[759] A new Bunyoro Agreement was to aid a planned District Administration Ordinance. The Mukama was to be relegated to the position of constitutional ruler; and, in the Council, the number of 'representatives of the people' – to be indirectly elected by sub-county councils – would more than double, giving them clear majority over unelected members. These developments heralded a new era that would be directed by educated younger men whose

[758] K.P. Gower, 'Appreciation of the political situation in Bunyoro', August 1954, ICS, ICS29/1/2/22.
[759] K. Hancock, 'Brief reflections on my discussions in Ankole, Toro and Bunyoro', August 1954, ICS, ICS29/1/2/22.

authority was derived from their conversance with the esoteric ways of the colonial state and the world of paper.

A vibrant new Runyoro-language newspaper both reflected and stimulated these political convulsions. In 1953, under the editorship of Hoima schoolteacher Peter R.M. Mijumbi, *Mwebingwa* was launched with backing from the Catholic White Fathers Mission. Covering church and general news in both Bunyoro and Tooro, the title had print runs of 2,000 to 3,000 for most of the 1950s, and went from a monthly to a bi-weekly after its first year. *Mwebingwa* took a politically 'moderate' stance according to a colonial report in 1956.[760] Though this newspaper borrowed its name from one of the mukama's honorific titles meaning 'the one I come to when in need', it self-consciously provided alternative, subversive recourse. As the sole Runyoro-language newspaper beyond the dry newssheet produced by the government, *Mwebingwa* quickly gained readers and contributors among lettered men of all faiths. But its primary - and privately acknowledged - aim was to criticise the Protestant chiefs who in Bunyoro held virtually all the positions in the top two ranks of the chiefly hierarchy.[761] Frustration felt by Catholics in these years was to lead to the creation of the Democratic Party in Buganda. Locally the newspaper was soon considered to pose a threat to the chiefs' entrenched power and privilege because it 'points out bad behaviour and sheds light, its voice goes far and it helps the poor a lot', explained Mijumbi.[762] In 1954-1955 *Mwebingwa* was

[760] Uganda Department of Information, 'Confidential notes on the press of Uganda', n.d. (1956?), UKNA, CO 822/957.
[761] Mbarara Diocese, Untitled questionnaire response, 1956, A.G.M.Afr., GEN.511/Birraux/4/511198.
[762] 'Mwebingwa Mwebingwa', *Mwebingwa,* 15 December 1954.

to cause serious ructions by giving space for letters from Bugungu besides the dry reports of the Catholic Nyoro-Gahya headmaster who acted as correspondent.

In this period of increasingly public politics and emerging revolt from educated modernisers on the plateau, 'new men' also came to the fore in Bugungu. The first generation of men who had completed primary education and, in select cases, further training on the plateau and beyond returned to Bugungu in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Their number included clerks like junior secondary-educated Hosea K. Muhigwa, and a man called Daniel K. Wairindi, who had trained as a tailor at a Junior Secondary Technical College in the early 1950s in Tooro District. Many were primary teachers, such Kisansya Anglican's headmaster Abimereki Kwolekya and Bugana Anglican's Yosamu Nyamazabo, and Ndandamire Catholics Sebastiano Kagoro and Francisco Rwamukaaga. They joined a typewriter-owning Catholic ex-teacher called Yakobo Kiiza, who survived off a pension earnt through wartime service which had left him paraplegic.[763] One of the first of the lowland literate intelligentsia to turn to *Mwebingwa* was Muhigwa, who urged his fellows to do the same. '[Y]ou have many complaints which you have not written down (...)', he lamented, '(...) we should make efforts to advocate (...) to see that we are considered!'.[764]

The lettered lowlanders constituted themselves as a social group but claimed the civility and authority to speak for a particular place and people. Cognisant that transformed district and national political milieus offered new opportunities for advancement, political aspirants identified the District Council as a new location of authority and power. By the very act of writing, and writing in Runyoro, these

[763] ADC to Martin, 12 March 1956, MDA, BOX 510, MIS.12/1.
[764] H.W.K Muhigwa, 'Engudo ya Bugungu erikorwa di', *Mwebingwa,* 1 March 1954.

men used *Mwebingwa* to make known Bugungu's civilised, 'progressive' credentials to colonial and African audiences beyond the lowlands. The 'new men' took a different approach in order to persuade the authorities that Bugungu was itself worthy of a different approach from the authorities. Defining themselves in opposition to the erstwhile sub-colonial civilisers, the chiefs, these men were the *basomu/banyaakusoma* ('the readers') or *beegesibweho* ('those who had been learned' or 'those who had been civilised').

These individuals had partly internalised the old Nyoro-Gahya idea that 'to be learned' or 'to be civilised' meant to have adopted Nyoro-Gahya ways. These cultural expressions had been elevated as markers of status more recently through their association with the structures of colonial modernity that these men experienced. Runyoro was the official, written language of the local government, school, church, and print media, and had been validated further by post-war orthographic initiatives sponsored by the colonial Department for Education.[765] A sense of Nyoro-Gahya cultural chauvinism on the plateau was heightened by Ganda efforts to stamp it out in the Lost Counties.

One Catholic missionary was not wholly mistaken in 1953 when he noted, rather vaguely, that 'the Bagungu' had been 'more or less absorbed by the Banyoro'.[766] Among the few educated elites from Bugungu with whom missionaries had closest contact, some 'tried to hide', one informant recalled – they 'tried to be like the Bagahya'.[767] But the tendency for people of Bugungu to 'regard themselves as a

[765] R.A. Snoxall, 'Chairman's Summary: Western Province Languages Orthography Committee', 25 February 1946, HDA, EDU.12
[766] H. Blanc, 'Bunyoro, Toro. Interlacustrine Bantu-Uganda, Diocese of Mbarara, Part 1', 1953, UCLA, Collection 246, Box 7, Folder 1.
[767] Int. Gungu 7a.

separate people', was a more powerful phenomenon.[768] In reciprocation of the plateau society's derision and denigration of Bugungu, they excluded themselves from plateau society. It was one thing to write privately claiming to be a 'Munyoro by tribe' in letters applying for support from a Local Government that made clear that 'Applicants must be Banyoro' in its adverts.[769] It was quite another to accept the claims of Nyoro-Gahya ethno-civilisationalism.

People from Bugungu who made it up the escarpment for education often found it difficult to reconcile the notion of Nyoro-Gahya superiority with the state of plateau they encountered. They tended to deride and denigrate Nyoro-Gahya men. Though the term Gahya was still much in use at the northern peripheries, it only tended to be used in oral communication, owing to its derogatory connotations of slavishness.[770] Gahya was also gendered: in Bugungu 'it was unheard of for a mature boy to carry water on his head' or 'to dig [in the garden]'; in Masindi and Hoima 'it was normal'.[771] Many lowlanders tended to deprecate even more the palpable poverty and despair of the plateau population who themselves called Bunyoro *ensi y'enaku*, or 'the country of poverty'.[772] By the 1950s in the lowlands, more than a decade of localised economic boom brought new social status and communal confidence; it was the 'only place in Bunyoro where

[768] 'Visit of His excellency the Governor to Bunyoro, January 15th 1955', n.d., HDA, ADM.15/Vol.3.
[769] For examples, see Mugasa to DC Bunyoro, 13 January 1956, HDA, STF.10/Vol.2; 'Bunyoro Native Government: Overseas Scholarships', *Mwebingwa,* 20 April 1957.
[770] Int. Gungu 23a; for one of only a few references in the archives in this period, see H. Blanc, 'Bunyoro, Toro. Interlacustrine Bantu-Uganda, Diocese of Mbarara, Part 1', 1953, UCLA, Collection 246, Box 7, Folder 1; O-Daganywa to Chairman Appointment Committee, 9 February 1960, MDA, BOX 626.
[771] Int. Gungu 16a.
[772] J.H.M. Beattie, 'Bunyoro through the looking glass', *Journal of African Administration* 12, no. 2 (1960), pp. 85-94.

they had any cattle'.[773] Bugungu's 4,000 or so cattle in 1951 represented the vast majority of the district's stock.[774] Brideprice payment demonstrated a sensitivity to per capita cattle ownership, and related rates of polygyny. In Bugungu the typical total value of the payment – in cash, cattle or goats, or, more commonly, a combination thereof – went up from a few hundred shillings in the mid-1940s to about a thousand by the early 1950s. Social distance between Bugungu and the uplands was maintained.[775] It was 'almost unthinkable' for a Nyoro-Gahya man to make the payment required for a bride from Bugungu.[776] This manifestation of economic disparity itself came to be naturalised and ethnicised: '[t]he Abagungu have different ways in marriage', one upland informant told a researcher; 'for us we used to marry by delivering a he-goat and local beer (…) But for them they use cattle and many goats'.[777]

Yet the new men of Bugungu tended to deprecate even more the jealousy, resentment, and ostracisation they imputed to the plateau. The lowland scribes composed letters that both reflected and intensified collective anxiety, indignation and opposition to Bugungu's upland and colonial overlords. In *Mwebingwa* Muhigwa began to rail against both the colonial and local governments' tendency of 'pressing the Bagungu hard' without providing anything in return.[778] 'You

[773] W.R. Bazley, 'Reminiscences as district officer in Uganda', RHL, Mss.Afr.s.924, f.12.
[774] 'Annual Report for Bunyoro District for 1951', 1952, HDA.
[775] Ints. Gungu 9a &5b; DC Bunyoro to Provincial Agricultural Officer, 19 January 1953, MDA, AGR.3/COT.2.
[776] Int. Gungu 4c.
[777] JWP, Nyoro29b, 30 March 1998.
[778] H.W.K Muhigwa, 'Bugungu n'etontoroma', *Mwebingwa,* 15 July 1954; Kwolekya, 'Bugungu ehikirra etunge omugabo', *Mwebingwa*, 1 September 1954.

quickly decide that the people of Bugungu should pay 112/- or 62/- in form of taxes because they are rich, because they have cows', argued Kwolekya.[779]

With their individual letters to *Mwebingwa* making little impact on the plight of Bugungu, the lettered lowlanders decided to write collectively and directly to the government. Such an approach had shown some potential. After a letter from 'all the Bagungu' about their chief's misconduct reached the DC, Baligonzaki was replaced by Fesito Magambo, who hailed from Bugungu.[780] Literate men in their late twenties and thirties wrote into existence a new advocacy group, the Bugungu (or *Bagungu*) Poll Tax Payers Assembly (BPTPA). They composed a memorandum in English signed by 29 men, and on 20 September sent it to officials at every level from the County Chief to the Chief Secretary in Entebbe. Among the members of this inter-denominational, inter-clan advocacy organisation were lightly educated 'progressive' fishermen, like Koosya Bahoire, but the BPTPA association's moving spirits were clerks and teachers. The BPTPA provided, in Muhigwa's estimation, both a 'loud voice' and 'capacity' to 'present to the protectorate government the petitions of the people of Bugungu'.[781]

District administrators were inclined towards a sympathetic view of the lowlanders' plight.[782] The district administration were assailed by complaints regarding game policy during their tours of Bugungu, but the DC's efforts to convince Kinloch to reconsider his department's approach came to nothing. Kinloch had dismissed their petition as 'nonsense' in his correspondence with the

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[779] Kwolekya, 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 1 September 1954.
[780] 'All the Bagungu' to DC Bunyoro, 13 July 1954, HDA, MIS.12/3 Vol.2
[781] Muhigwa, 'Empamo za Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 15 October 1954.
[782] 29.9.54, BTB3; Gower to PCWP, 19 October 1954, MDA, BOX 510, MIS.12/1; H. Mugenyi, 'A.D.C. wa Masindi akabungira Bugungu ha kya 26.9.54', *Mwebingwa*, 15 November 1954; UP, *PCAR 1954* (Entebbe, 1955), p. 71.

Secretary for Agriculture and Natural Resources in Entebbe. Accusing a 'large number of the inhabitants of the Bugungu area' of wanting to 'run with the fox and hunt with the hounds', Kinloch asserted that Bugungu would not receive assistance from game guards until the people showed willingness to 'mend their ways'.[783] Cognisant of Kinloch's views, the Secretary had apparently written a reply to the BPTPA on behalf of the whole administration in late November.

Their petition did not have the impact for which they hoped. The Secretary's late November reply did not reach the BPTPA.[784] The silence caused imaginations to run wild. Alongside the usual complaints about letting his 'fellow Bagungu' get 'left behind' in terms of 'development', speculation regarding the government's silence began to develop, surfacing in increasingly seditious missives to the authorities and *Mwebingwa*. Muhigwa accused the Bunyoro Government of acting to 'suppress the petitions of the people of Bugungu'.[785] As time went on, its members took growing umbrage at the perceived slight. 'I would like to request both Governments to always reply the petitions we write down such as these, we don't write to entertain readers, we write to show our problems and ideas'. Evoking a revival of deeply rooted mechanisms of political accountability, Muhigwa even threatened a protest migration to areas across the water: 'If it is Government's plan to chase us from our native land; the people of Bugungu have plans of crossing to Congo and West Nile! Very few will come up [to the plateau]!'.[786]

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[783] Kinloch to Secretary for Agriculture & Natural Resources, 11 November 1954, MDA, BOX 510, MIS.12/1.
[784] D.K. Wairindi to DC, 23 March 1955, HDA, GAM.3.
[785] Muhigwa, 'Empamo za Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 15 October 1954.
[786] H.W.K Muhigwa, 'Enyamaiswa z'omuhendo kukira Omuntu', *Mwebingwa,* 1 January 1955.

At the same time, irritated by the Mukama's dilatory approach to the Fort Magungu deal, the colonial conservationists considered a novel means of extortion. With the park boundary finally demarcated at the end of 1954, the stage was set for the conversion of the Game Reserve into a Sanctuary, if the territory swap involving the Fort could only be concluded.[787] The district administration planned to resort to creating what they termed 'a lever'.[788] The Sanctuary was to come with an additional stricture: the Game Warden Kinloch planned to amend the proclamation to declare a sanctuary for elephant, hippopotamus *and crocodile*, supposedly to protect the population of the latter at Fort Magungu. But he offered to remove this protection for crocodiles 'if and when negotiations (...) for inclusion of the Fort Magungu area in the National Park are successful'.[789] But the time-honoured local administrative strategies vis-à-vis Bugungu were poorly received by Cohen's Secretariat in Entebbe. The Secretary of African Affairs warned the DC that 'there would be no moral justification' for applying such a lever 'to force a concession'.[790]

Though the territory exchange offer was to remain on the table, officials decided to press on with the extant park boundary demarcation, and the concomitant conversion of Bugungu from Game Reserve to Sanctuary. Around the start of March, news that these changes were scheduled to come into effect on 1 April 1955 caused significant ructions. The DC reported hearing claims from members of the Bunyoro Hancock Committee that the Governor had 'pulled a fast one on them'

[787] Gower to the Mukama, 2 February 1955, HDA, GAM.11.
[788] DC Bunyoro to Secretary for African Affairs, 22 December 1954, UKNA, FCO 141/18175.
[789] Game Warden to Secretary for Agriculture and Natural Resources, 24 January 1955, HDA, GAM.11
[790] Marshall to Gower, 8 March 1955, UKNA, FCO 141/18175.

by pushing the Sanctuary through while he still has power to do so without the need for the District Council's approval. After meeting with this committee's members to see how the latest draft of the new Bunyoro Agreement had been received, the DC reported having been 'immediately assailed (…) in connection with that most regrettable proclamation' which had 'aroused very considerable mistrust and doubt as to the Government's good faith'.[791] Negotiations over the Bunyoro Agreement were almost derailed. The District Council's Standing Committee in the middle of March made clear that they were implacably opposed to the Sanctuary, and also refused to countenance the proposed boundary amendment at Fort Magungu.[792] The Council committee that visited Bugungu on 10 March 1955 to examine the area in question, reported back unfavourably on UNP's plan 'to make a memorial for the coming of the Europeans', noting that 'in fact there exist already memorials in Bunyoro'.[793]

The hue and cry in Hoima was nothing compared to the groundswell of antipathy and a proliferation of threats and rumours the Sanctuary proclamation had triggered in Bugungu on 11 March 1955.[794] The usual acrimonious attitude towards the authorities had already intensified. BPTPA members had stepped up their activities partly in the self-interested knowledge that in the form of the District Administration Ordinance, legislative progress had been made towards the democratisation of the District Council; but also partly owing to the assumption that the colonial government had decided that it would 'not bother to respond' to BPTPA's September letter. 'Should we stop paying tax?', Muhigwa asked. '[T]hey

[791] Gower to Marshall, 3 March 1955, UKNA, FCO 141/18175.
[792] Minutes of the standing committee meeting held on 14th March, 1955 together with the Omukama's comments thereon, HDA, GAM.11
[793] 'Report of the Sub-Committee', n.d. but March 1955, HDA, GAM.11.
[794] H. Mugenyi, 'A.D.C. Akabungira Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 15 April 1955.

forget that the prevailing peace depends upon we the subjects!', he added, menacingly. He chided member of the Hancock Committee and Legislative Council, George Magezi, for having never visited Bugungu. 'We don't know how such people make their reports on this area', he explained.' 'Do they put in facts, or they leave BLANK spaces?' he asked.[795]

At first, the BPTPA for its part responded on 23 March in more measured fashion. Writing 'humbly' to the authorities and *Mwebingwa* as 'obedient servants', they reinforced the Standing Committee's arguments, begging to change its decision to gazette Bugungu as a 'land of animals', not of people. 'We the people of Bugungu' were 'born here long time ago even before the coming of whites'; now, because of the change, 'animals will defeat man and kill him, and eat his food crops'. Anyone 'who survives will have to run away' and 'some will die because of stress, suffering, and malaria and all that will result from change of environment'.[796] The BPTPA's members maintained that it offered no substantive change to the punitive status quo under which they were suffering. All forms of restrictive conservationist zoning were the same – they fell under the rubric of '*karantini*'. Differences in conservation status had correlated with extreme neglect from game guards in the past in the case of the game reserve. The indignation was compounded by a sense that the plans for the Sanctuary had been concealed by the authorities. This impression was produced at least in part by apparent miscommunication in 1952, and lengthy subsequent delay in implementation.

[795] H.W.K Muhigwa, 'Eby'amahano', *Mwebingwa,* 15 March 1955.
[796] D.K. Wairindi to DC, 23 March 1955, HDA, GAM.3 Reprinted in *Mwebingwa*, 15 April 1955.

Believing the Council had consented to the Sanctuary in mid-1952, colonial officials were at a loss as to the reasons for this 'considerable stir'.[797] The DC Bunyoro offered the Mukama assurances that within the Sanctuary protection would be afforded to Bugungu by the Game Department, 'provided that the Bagungu co-operate'.[798] The DC complained to Entebbe that the Mukama and his katikiro 'will not understand, and do not wish to understand'; but he saw 'no alternative but to tell them that (...) they must lump it'. The matter of Fort Magungu seemed 'more difficult still'.[799] The DC proceeded to threaten the Mukama with imposing a crocodile sanctuary along the river, in order to force his agreement on the Fort.[800] Entebbe was 'at a loss to understand' the fuss, as the sanctuary had been part of the 'original undertaking' in 1952, but directed the DC not to pursue his crocodile sanctuary plans.[801]

But the colonial government proceeded to gazette the Sanctuary on 1 April 1955. Any semblance of the courtesy and submissiveness rapidly disappeared. Muhigwa and other BPTPA members speculated and peddled scurrilous rumours of dastardly schemes of forced displacement. Poaching was surely a 'mere excuse' for the withdrawal of game guards, Muhigwa declared; it was nonsensical to make the misdeeds of a 'few bad people' produce 'suffering for the entire people'. The authorities must have 'something hidden in their mind', he concluded. The dastardly aim of colonial game policies was for 'the Bagungu to be attacked by the wild animals, so that they run away (...) which would then let the government

[797] Secretary for Agriculture and Natural Resources to DC Bunyoro, 18 March 1955, HDA, GAM.11.
[798] Gower to Mukama, 24 March 1955, HDA, GAM.11.
[799] DC Bunyoro to Williams, 23 March 1955, UKNA, FCO 141/18175.
[800] Gower to Mukama, 24 March 1955, HDA, GAM.11.
[801] Williams to Gowers, 30 March 1955, UKNA, FCO 141/18175.

attach [Bugungu] to *karantini*'.[802] '[F]oreigners are coming with the intention of closing Bugungu', declared one 'anonymous' *Mwebingwa* letter, which Wairindi claimed to have 'found'.[803] In another broadside in the same inflammatory vein, another BPTPA man claimed to have even been told by kingdom officials that 'you will migrate (...) so that Bugungu remains for animals!'.[804]

Bugungu's inhabitants had impeccable reasons for believing the incendiary theories. These rumours resonated with lowlanders' historical subjection to collectivising punishment at the hands of the authorities. The Sanctuary in particular raised the hackles because the spectre of displacement still stalked the lowland residents, having been stirred most recently in 1949. Like the host of other rumours that circulated across broad swathes of colonial Africa, conspiracy theories relating to conservation areas gained traction because they rendered familiar and rational the exotic, iniquitous, and indecipherable; but also imaginatively elevated particular oft-disregarded peoples to the centre of the colonial state's attentions and machinations.[805] In Tooro, when Wairindi was there for college a year or two previously, the UNC had stirred up support for itself by capitalising on similar popular rumours about the National Parks Ordinance.[806]

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[802] H.W.K Muhigwa, 'Okwahukaniza obucwi bwe misango ha bulemi', *Mwebingwa,* 15 April 1955.
[803] 'Akiki' and Wairindi, 'Bugungu kuforwa y'ebisoro', *Mwebingwa*, 15 April 1955.
[804] Enea Mukuru, 'National Park ya Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 1 June 1955.
[805] Luise White, *Speaking with vampires: rumor and history in East and Central Africa* (Berkeley, CA, 2000).
[806] The bill was 'nothing but another piece of cunning British Colonial legislation intended to prepare the immigration of Jews to Western Uganda', Ignatius Musazi recalled in UNP, *RATUNP 1966* (Entebbe, 1967), p. 5.

Lowlanders defied Nyoro practices of submission by increasingly adopting less veiled, antagonistic rhetoric; people in the lowlands saw the district government as complicit – driven by vindictiveness and envy.[807] One anonymous letter sarcastically declared that 'We would like to inform the government of Rukirabasaija [i.e. the Mukama] that (…) we cannot befriend lions and elephants (…) [as] we do not know the language of animals'.[808] When news came that the Standing Committee had assented to a boundary delineation to which many lowlanders objected, another BPTPA man cast aspersions about the motives and conduct of the District Council in general, and the Katikiro in particular; it had been an attempt 'to disorganise our area without our knowledge'. 'We have rejected the National Park completely and with all our energy, it will not be established in our country!', he warned, rather belatedly.[809] An increasingly belligerent Wairindi declared that 'Bugungu does not belong to Europe, and the whites just came to colonise us (…) [W]hy are they deceiving us (…)?'. 'A bad name brings sorrow - SANCTUARY!!,' Wairindi protested, requesting that the DC 'erase that bad name'.[810]

In this period Nyoro-Gahya leaders were attempting to divert attentions to Bunyoro's *cause célèbre*, the so-called 'Lost Counties' claim.[811] While Nyoro 'homespun historians' invoked a glorious history of their kingdom, Gungu political entrepreneurs focused the attentions of the lowlanders and the authorities on a different narrative:

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[807] Muhigwa, 'Empano z'Abantu ba Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 1 July 1955.
[808] 'Akiki' and Wairindi, 'Bugungu kuforwa y'ebisoro', *Mwebingwa*, 15 April 1955.
[809] Mukuru, 'National Park ya Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 1 June 1955.
[810] D.K Wairindi, 'Bugungu okuforwa y'ebisoro (Byongirweho)', *Mwebingwa,* 1 July 1955.
[811] 'Bunyoro's claim for Mubende', *Uganda Herald,* 30 May 1955.

our country Bugungu (…) in the past (…) was full of people, stretching from Lake Albert to Pajao hill, but a disease called sleeping sickness attacked the area and killed people, and Government took us to Kitana, and time came when the diseases ceased(…) we tried to plead with Government until they heard our plea and allowed us to go back in our area. [812]

Through this history of suffering and heroic struggle, a moral right over Bugungu was asserted. The spectre of separatism was mischievously evoked by one BPTPA member when he impiously described the Gungu people as Bugungu's '*bakama*' – an ambiguous term, meaning both 'kings' and 'owners'. Lowland partisans were turning the Nyoro irredentist petitioners' tactics and essentialist language against them.

Reconciliation, revolution and reversion, mid-1955 to c.1957

These raucous protests did not achieve the erasure of Sanctuary status from Bugungu. But the second half of 1955 nevertheless, represented a major turning point in the history of colonial Bugungu. Ahead of the September signing of the Bunyoro Agreement, much of the furore in Bugungu died down as the authorities addressed the most brazen collectivising punishments which had most fuelled rumours and distrust. Game guards were sent to Bugungu for the first time in two years. In that time only nine elephants had been shot; in the second half of 1955, more than 50 were shot by these guards over the course of four or five months. [813] The administrators assuaged certain fears about the Sanctuary; '[d]on't get worried that we shall leave Bugungu, that will not happen', Muhigwa assured

[812] Mukuru, 'National Park ya Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 1 June 1955.
[813] Y.K. Kalisa, 'Bugungu, ha kya 15.7.55', *Mwebingwa,* 15 August 1955; 'Notes on H.E. the Governor's Rukurato at Bugungu', 3/11/55', HDA, ADM.15/Vol.3.

Mwebingwa's lowland readership. Muhigwa learnt from officials that Entebbe had in fact sent them a reply to their September 1954 letter; the BPTPA's missives had been misplaced at the sub-county headquarters by 'uneducated chiefs', he explained.[814] Funds for the road had been allocated; and was work was to start in the dry season expected around the end of the year. Fishers in mid-1955 benefited from the removal of restrictions on gill net mesh sizes.[815] Relations concerning the cattle trade improved as a Veterinary Assistant and a Veterinary Scout showed themselves able to help control the spread of disease and resist the depletion of herds.[816]

A sense of reconciliation between the lowland literati and both governments became apparent. Bunyoro's representative Magezi had taken the matter of the road to the Legislative Council in August 1955.[817] Muhigwa strikingly took to the national English-language press to urge 'his fellow countrymen' – the 'people of Bunyoro' – to elect as Katikiro, 'one who has a deep love of his country'.[818] Muhigwa publicly offered Bugungu's petitioning power to the Lost Counties, but he expected in return 'other areas of Bunyoro' 'to join hands' with Bugungu. Corporeal metaphors emerged to enjoin the plateau to devote governmental resources to Bugungu: 'A healthy person is someone whose entire body has no pain (...). What ate hair did not spare the brain'.[819]

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[814] Muhigwa, 'Empano z'Abantu ba Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 1 July 1955.
[815] Fisheries officer to DC Bunyoro, 7 July 1955, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2.
[816] 'Annual Veterinary Report, Bunyoro District, 1955', 7 January 1956, HDA, ADM.14.
[817] DC Bunyoro to the Secretary for African Affairs, 25 August 1955, HDA, COM.2/Vol.3.
[818] H.W.K. Muhigwa, 'The Katikiro of Bunyoro', *Uganda Argus*, 5 September 1955.
[819] H.W.K Muhigwa, 'Okubunga kwa Gavana mu Bunyoro', *Mwebingwa,* 15 November 1955.

But the nature of the relationship between Bugungu and the authorities in some way remained unchanged. The imperative civilisational statements by status-conscious literates remained strong. It was no coincidence that at this time – in August 1955 – a group of younger men from Bugungu with higher qualifications than the BPTPA members constituted itself on a more formal basis. These men were on their way to becoming the first to go on to senior secondary schools and Primary Teacher Training Colleges above the escarpment across Western Uganda. With encouragement from an Anglican missionary, and advised by a newly qualified Catholic teacher called Joseph Gabondi Tundulu from Bugungu, they convened themselves as a self-consciously elite and 'progressive' Bugungu Outside Student Association (BOSA) – a 'club for educated young men'.[820]

The BPTPA's members for their part seized upon another chance to burnish the reputations of both Bugungu and themselves. In November 1955 renewed BPTPA co-ordination was occasioned by a short visit of Governor Cohen in the course of his routine twelve-day tour of Western Province, as Bunyoro neared the last session of the district council before its reconstitution.[821] Cohen's meeting with the lowland leaders was an opportunity to level claims to resources. But it was also a chance to publicly impress upon a gathered mass of inhabitants of Bugungu that the BPTPA leaders were essential brokers between them and the colonial state. The BPTPA schoolteacher members orchestrated an impressive display. Cohen was received by Ndandamire's school band, entertained with a 'Kigungu dance' by men and women at Buliisa, serenaded with '3 songs in English and 1 in Rugungu' by schoolchildren wearing new uniforms made especially for the occasion, and

[820] Ridsdale to Brown, 15 April 1958, CUA, 1/85/614/2.
[821] 'New powers soon for Bunyoro Rukurato', *Uganda Argus*, 9 September 1955.

confronted by the sight of a huge crowd of people, and upwards of 1,500 cattle, which had been mustered near Kisansya Primary.[822]

The Governor's very appearance was taken as a powerful sign of Bugungu's official rehabilitation. Many were to celebrate his vague promise to 're-examine' the question of the Sanctuary and 'whether it was in fact necessary'. But his administration remained intransigently cloth-eared. 'The Bagungu should not be punished for the theft of the pontoon bridge, which was stolen by an enemy of the Bagungu', the BPTPA told the Governor.[823] But the latter responded with threats of these same sort of collectivising punishments. He claimed that the people 'must be ready to work on the road', or the plans 'cannot be put into effect'. 'The Bagungu should co-operate with Government by leaving off poaching', he also warned, 'or the present policy of protection might be reconsidered'.[824] The administration observed that Bugungu was 'at the best of times mistrustful of government'.[825] Colonial officials were steadfast in their determination to deny that they had given Bugungu reasons to distrust.

The colonial government did make the same mistakes again straight away, however. The fragile rapprochement between the lowlands and the authorities in the mid-1950s indirectly benefited from a significant increase in the size of fish catches. Prices never quite reached their early 1950s levels again. But many of the main obstacles to the commercialisation of the fishing industry were removed.

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[822] County Chief to Katikiro, 21 November 1955, HDA, ADM.15/Vol.3.
[823] Abimereki Kwolekya of BPTPA, as reported in County Chief to Katikiro, 21 November 1955, HDA, ADM.15/Vol.3.
[824] 'Notes on H.E. the Governor's Rukurato at Bugungu, 3/11/55', HDA, ADM.15/Vol.3.
[825] DC Bunyoro to Minister of Finance et al, 6 February 1956, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2.

Use of more durable yet affordable nylon nets increased appreciably.[826] Crocodile populations that threatened the fishers and damaged nets dramatically reduced in these years. Though hunters were not licensed to trap crocodiles in Bugungu until 1958, the lowland littoral benefited from these efforts elsewhere on Lake Albert. Licensing restrictions and supervision were relaxed by officials now convinced that, if anything, the lake was 'generally under-fished'.[827] The government provided loans to fund the development of a new class of 'progressive' fishermen who had demonstrated that they were 'prepared to re-invest some of their profits in improving equipment'. [828] Planked boats and motor-powered canoes, often bought by these means, dramatically improved both fishing in deeper waters and marketing. [829] Fisherman 'rejoiced' when the authorities in West Nile District licensed Belgian and Greek buyers from Congo to operate at Panyimur; a 'miniature Grimsby' was developing with some colonial infrastructural investment.[830] 'Plenty of money and plenty of trade here', officials reported in early 1957.[831]

But marketing still remained a point of contention. Officials viewed the continued reliance – directly or indirectly – on the Congo market as dangerous and unsatisfactory owing to losses in protein and hard currency, and the vulnerability to cessation or price volatility or collapse. After the rehabilitation of the road in

[826] Bahoire, 'Kuruga'.
[827] UP, *ARGFD 1956-1957* (Entebbe, 1957), p. 46; Fisheries Officer Masindi to Katikiro, 18 July 1955, HDA, GAM.7/Vol.3; 'Notes provided by the fisheries officer', n.d. (but 1957), HDA, ADM.15/Vol.3.
[828] UP, *ARGFD* 1956-1957 (Entebbe, 1957), pp. 46, 49, 97-98; Anderson to DC Bunyoro, 5 June 1957, HDA, GAM.6.
[829] Rwangire to DC Bunyoro, 14 May 1956, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.
[830] UP, *ARGFD 1955-1956* (Entebbe, 1956), p. 101; Basohi ba Bugungu to DCWN, 15 January 1957, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.
[831] 12.2.57, BTB3.

1956, the Fisheries officers began to attempt to force its use in order to develop Uganda's internal markets and reorient the fish trade away from Congo. There were now no excuses; it was to be 'up to the fishermen to make the effort themselves'.[832] The DC, urged caution, however, about these 'possibly over optimistic' plans.[833] Bugungu made little effort to comply. A few months later fishers came asking for assistance after a drop in the prices at Panyimur. Fishers renewed demands for regular buying – and perhaps even a fish market – in Bugungu.[834]

The Regional Fisheries Officer responded petulantly. He scolded them for being 'too lazy' to stimulate alternatives to the Congo markets in Uganda; his assistance was withheld until they 'do something for yourselves.[835] This approach intensified in mid-1957 even after the road deteriorated after a matter of mere months. Despite the expectation of 'cases of hardship amongst the smaller operators', the Fisheries Officer convinced the DC to refuse licences to Congo buyers in Bugungu. Pinning fresh hopes on 'progressive fishermen', he believed his policy would 'teach' lessons that had 'to be learnt sooner or later'.[836] He pointed to another attempt to remedy the road, as well as a new track linking Wanseko to the markets of northern Uganda via the park.[837] But most fishers, out of desperation, continued to dispose of their fish at Mahagi Port and Panyimur in 1957. Officials were soon forced to resign themselves to this situation. Late 1957 inspections

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[832] Game Warden to Permanent Secretary The Ministry of Natural Resources, 11 January 1956, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2.
[833] Gower to Permanent Secretary The Ministry of Natural Resources, 31 January 1956, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2.
[834] 20.7.57, BTB3; Basohi ba Bugungu to DCWN, 15 January 1957, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.
[835] Stoneman to Bugungu Fishermen, 18 January 1957, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.
[836] Anderson to DC Bunyoro, 5 June 1957, HDA, GAM.6.
[837] UP, *ARGFD 1956-1957* (Entebbe, 1957), p. 47.

indicated that it was most unlikely to become a reliable all-weather road in this very low-lying country 'for many years to come'.[838]

More glaring still were colonial attempts to leverage concessions regarding the national park little more than a year after the Sanctuary controversy. UNP had not given up on its designs on Fort Magungu; the colonial administration in mid-1956 returned to its old transactional tricks by offering to degazette the Sanctuary if the Bunyoro local government agreed to relinquish the area around Fort Magungu. The outraged Council rejected and admonished these advances, while demanding the Sanctuary's revocation, and the provision of more Game Guards – or even a fence or ditch – on the boundary with the park.[839]

But there was a strong sense in the lowlands that their treatment by the district government's representative in the district, the sub-county chief, was discriminatory. Magambo took an unusually energetic approach to the matter of poaching, which was estimated by UNP to be worse in Bugungu than anywhere else along the park boundary.[840] After Magambo's house was torched on 24 August 1955, one of his supporters complained that the culprits were 'the same people who (...) have been demanding for another Mugungu to come' – the ones who complained 'that the Bagungu do not have any right to choose [sub-county and parish] chiefs who are born within'.[841] 'As I am one born of this country, I should like to know the reason why people keep on burning the government

[838] DC Bunyoro to Fisheries Officer, 29 November 1957, HDA, GAM.6.
[839] Katikiro to DC Bunyoro, 6 June 1956, HDA, GAM.11; Gower to the Katikiro, 25 April 1956, HDA, GAM.11; 'Minutes of the General Purposes Committee, 12th-14th July 1956', HDA.
[840] UP, *RATUNP* 1955 (Entebbe, 1956) p. 9.
[841] Y.M. Ukumi, 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 15 November 1955.

buildings', Magambo demanded.[842] The writers of an anonymous complaint against him had already explained to the County chief 'we want the gombolola [sub-county] chief to be burnt therein'.[843] This sustained 'nuisance' campaign led to the 1955 incarceration of the ringleader, BPTPA member and poacher-trader-fishmonger Safulensi Lukumu Kaheeru.[844] But it continued as Magambo was increasingly at loggerheads with general population and his own chiefs, over the hunting of game, particularly hippo.[845] There was no great warmth between Magambo and the new lettered elites either. 'You should know that he hates the educated people', one of them told *Mwebingwa*.[846] But others feared that upland alternatives to Magambo were worse. 'Isn't the chief we have now a Mugungu? Isn't he born here and don't you very well know his clan?', one man asked after Magambo's house had again been burnt in December 1956. '[I]f we continue being cruel like that, where will the chiefs be drawn from to come and work here?'.[847]

[842] F.K. Magambo (Sabagabo Bujenje) to Kaigo Bujenje, 22 November 1955, HDA, PUW.1/3.
[843] Anon. to Kaigo Bujenje, 4 October 1955, HDA, PUW.1/3.
[844] 9.5.55; 22.10.55, BTB3.
[845] Magambo to various, 11 July 1956, HDA, GAM.3; Magambo to [?], 25 September 1956, MDA, Box 626.
[846] L. Rwakaikara, 'Omusoro Bugungu', *Mugambizi,* 14 September 1956.
[847] Kiiza, 'Okucunika ebyombeko bya Govt. omu Bugungu', *Mugambizi*, 1 March 1957.

Figure 31: B.G. Kinloch, 'The "new look" in fishing canoes – Kabalega-built boat specially designed for use with an outboard motor'.[848]

'We Bagungu are eating each other like grasshoppers':[849] moral ethnicity in Bugungu in the mid-to-late 1950s

People in Bugungu internalised the denigrating discourses that colonial and Nyoro-Gahya officials deployed in relation to them. The ethno-civilisational gaze was always directed within as well as without. In a time of rapid socio-economic change, ethnicity was powerfully produced as a community of argument about virtuous Gungu moral order. Intra-communal debates about civilised behaviour had a deeper history in Bugungu but were offered a new forum in *Mwebingwa* and another weekly, *Mugambizi* ('the speaker') in the mid-1950s. Typewriter-owning

[848] UP, *ARGFD 1955-1956* (Entebbe, 1956), Plate XXVII.
[849] J.B. Kiiza, 'Ebikaguzo hali abazaire b'abaana bahara mu Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 22 February 1958.

Catholic conservative crusader Kiiza and his fellows made their highly partisan interventions as claims for moral authority, if not political office. The first civilising contributions upbraided those who continued to use older modes of political expression – burning down government buildings. 'Is this something that will develop us Bagungu?', asked Catholic schoolteacher Sebastiano Kagoro.[850] It was a 'bad habit', village chief Yosam Ukumu bemoaned. '[T]he Bagungu are the people who are destroying our area'.[851]

But reformers soon turned their attentions to other topics. Perhaps the biggest social transformations since the late 1930s were produced by the fishing industry. The massively increased catches since 1956 had brought in a particularly dramatic influx of cash to the 'progressive' fishermen who formed a group called 'Basohi ba Bugungu', or 'Fishermen of Bugungu', in around 1957. Bugungu was home to 'individually perhaps the richest people in Bunyoro', noted one veteran missionary.[852] Most of these were part of the new class of 'progressive' fishermen. The latter included some teacher-politicians who were investing their salaries in the capitalist sphere, but was mainly comprised of men with very little formal education. Some of this money was being reinvested in the transportation business. One man, Nabosi Wandera, owned a fishing camp which provided the funds for him to purchase not only a motor boat launch but also a five-tonne truck.[853] Other men invested in small shops in African trading centres on the road from Buliisa Township to Wanseko; such enterprises were 'springing up

[850] S. Kagoro, 'Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 15 August 1954.
[851] Y.M. Ukumi, 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 15 November 1955; J. B Kiiza, 'Okucunika ebyombeko bya Govt. omu Bugungu', *Mugambizi,* 1 March 1957.
[852] Ridsdale to Brown, 15 April 1958, CUA, 1/85/614/2.
[853] 'Omukama sees £100,000 fishing village', *Uganda Argus*, 29 October 1959.

everywhere', observed touring officials.[854] But a lot of profits also went into livestock. The population of Bugungu in 1957 was pushing 7,000 cattle; the wealthiest individuals owned 200 or more, and derived income from them by selling some at bi-annual or tri-annual markets, in response to growing demand for meat in upland Bunyoro.[855] At Bugungu's Christmas market of 1958, outsiders bought 327 heads of slaughter cattle, fetching 'Shs. 114, 656 [about £5,700]]to the pockets of Bagungu cattle owners'.[856]

Not all men in Bugungu accumulated such wealth. Economic disparities were exceptionally severe. Many men made a relatively comfortable living from the lake and cotton, but both were precarious. Some fishers remained in canoes which became 'floating coffins' in extreme.[857] '[W]e are about to be finished', warned one writer, after six men had been lost to the lake in one month.[858] Others were reduced to a pure agricultural existence as they had no fishing gear or canoes, and lived inland in scattered villages, like Bugana, connected to the road by footpaths. Crops were menaced by marauding game, and the people imperilled by famine.[859] While most of the populace grew some cotton, and were organised into growing societies, the prices it commanded were relatively low by the mid-to-late 1950s, and its marketing continued to present 'extreme difficulties' owing to the infrastructure.[860]

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[854] 8.5.55, BTB3.
[855] 11.2.57, BTB3.
[856] Senior Veterinary Assistant Bunyoro, 'Monthly report – November and December 1958', 5 January 1959, HDA, VET.1/Vol.2.
[857] Int. Gungu 15a; A.B. Kwomya, 'Propaganda', *Mwebingwa,* 1 November 1957.
[858] 'Bugungu Katwahwa!', *Mwebingwa*, 12 October 1957.
[859] Tomasi Mbarwa, 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 24 November 1956.
[860] 11.2.57 & 4.3.58, BTB3; Kamese to Assistant Agricultural Officer Bunyoro, 6 March, 1957, HDA.

The disruptive and unequal opportunities of economic change generated conflict. When one educated man was found guilty of assaulting his brother, the sub-county chief's decision to spare him the corporal punishment reportedly provoked one man to ask, 'So you only cane us, the poor?'.[861] Progressive fishermen offering transportation in their motor-powered canoes were accused of 'profiteering'; the 'heavy fees' forced many to risk paddling to Mahagi Port.[862] The agricultural poor found themselves living among the lowly Alur who grew their own crops but also sold their labour on a casual basis to other farmers, having left the shoreline around 1950 for areas like Bugana before spreading northward, around a new settlement called Ngwedo, located on the new road that UNP constructed to the park in about 1956.[863] Some immiserated young men banded together to engage in violent entrepreneurialism. A gang self-styled as 'Kampuni-Kumyoro', or 'the Company of Stranglers', attacked and robbed people at night, striking fear into the new men.[864]

For the first time members of the growing contingent of proponents of the 'new world' of Christianity felt emboldened to speak out. One young man who completed Junior Secondary was sent for training in the Anglican church in the late 1950s. But local Christian observance remained very restricted in the 1950s. 'The majority of the Bagungu say that "religion is for the whites [*abajungu*]"', Kiiza lamented in late 1956.[865] A British missionary complained that 'at least half the Bagungu are pagans, not even baptised' and served by 'absolutely inadequate

[861] S. Ndolerire, 'Abaguda tibakyafubirwa mu muno', *Mwebingwa,* 28 June 1958.
[862] Fisheries Officer to DC Bunyoro, 7 December 1957, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2.
[863] Ints. Alur 3 & 8.
[864] J.B. Kiiza, 'Aga Bugungu - Maumau n'omu Bugungu eraija', *Mwebingwa*, 7 June 1958.
[865] J.B. Kiiza 'Oburogo Bugungu', *Mugambizi*, 14 December 1956.

Church Teachers'.[866] 'They don't got to Church very much, and they do not support the Church Teachers they have had, in fact most of them have fled sooner or later'.[867] Criticisms were often levelled in the language of Christianity; in a discussion about religious observance, Kiiza wrote that 'the Bagungu prefer Mammon'.[868]

Different categories of littoral liturgists were locked in struggles over claims to special knowledge about individual and collective well-being in the 1950s. More numerous and more popular were *balegezi* and *balaamansi* – exponents of the 'old practices' of the world of 'phantoms' (*amahembe*) and *kihala*.[869] These men made waterside sacrifices to the deities such as Bolwa or Biswa rwa Nyambogo on behalf of the whole of Bugungu, involving vast sums of money as well as extensive co-ordination between lowland clans each performing their part, in series, along the shoreline.[870] In the first half of 1957, Shs. 800/- had been collected along with 'a very big sheep, dressed with branches of *muramura* tree and so many other things', which was taken deep into the waters of the lake 'to invoke [the god] Rubanga' 'so that rain can come'.[871]

The reproduction of gender relations and control of female sexuality were key points of contention. Certain older women exercised some political authority; but the lowlanders had acquired an ignominious reputation among the colonial and

[866] Ridsdale to Brown, 15 April 1958, CUA, 1/85/614/2.
[867] Ridsdale, 'Annual Letter 1958', October 1958, CMS, AF/AL/1950-59.
[868] Hoima Mission Diary, 17 April 1960, A.G.M.Afr., D.OR.168.
[869] Jalango, 'Bakyaikiriza Oburogo', *Mugambizi*, 23 November 1956.
[870] Ints. Gungu 4c, 5a, 18a, 19a & 20a.
[871] J.B. Kiiza, 'Bugungu n'empapura z'amahurre', *Mwebingwa*, 21 December 1957; J.B. Kiiza, 'Okugarukamu', *Mwebingwa*, 2 July 1960.

Nyoro authorities with regard to treating women as 'servants'.[872] Commodity production by absentee males at the lakeshore threw much of the household labour onto women, reinforcing the growing separation of male and female spaces as livestock expansion near the lakeside homesteads forced women to cultivate several miles to the east, where leopards eyed their babies, tied to their backs during digging.[873] Young men enjoyed a comparatively easy existence, herding cattle or helping on the shoreline; 'boys were kings', as one informant put it.[874]

Men engaged with particular Christian ideas of patriarchal authority in their attempts to control female sexuality.[875] Dances – both local and foreign – were occasions for acts 'which cannot be mentioned' and risked 'ruining the children', as they were difficult to 'control'.[876] Women were being left to 'loiter around' as 'prostitutes'.[877]Attitudes towards the role of women were changing in certain ways among some small sections of lowland society. In the mid-to-late 1950s, among Bugungu's small number of devoted Christians, the first female student went on to junior secondary school, and a women's group was founded by the wife of the sub-county chief Magambo.[878] One Protestant urged Bugungu not to treat women like animals: 'let her be in the noun class of MU-BA [i.e. that of humans].' It was necessary for a girl to go to school to learn 'modern behaviours', he opined;

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[872] Bazley, *Bunyoro*, pp. 62-63; Heneriko Mugenyi, 'Orukurato rwa Rukirabasaija orwabaireho', *Mwebingwa,* 1 August 1954.
[873] Bazley, *Bunyoro*, p. 57.
[874] Int. Gungu 17a.
[875] Ridsdale to Brown, 15 April 1958, CUA, 1/85/614/2.
[876] S. Ndoleriire, 'Bagonza ainara', *Mwebingwa,* 14 June 1958; J.B. Kiiza, 'Abazaire n'abalemi ba Bugungu kinu mukiteho aganyu goona', *Mwebingwa*, 1 November 1958.
[877] A.K. Jalango, 'Okubonesa Abakazi', *Mugambizi,* 24 August 1956.
[878] 'G.P.C. Bugungu', *Mugambizi*, 28 February 1958.

otherwise they would 'not be admired by an educated boy'.[879]

But there were nowhere near enough god-fearing 'educated boys', some believed. Generational tensions were also exposed in the letters by older conservative Christians in pages of *Mwebingwa*. In a piece titled 'Mau mau is coming to Bugungu', Kiiza chastened the uncivilised behaviour of young men. The 'short tempered' , 'energetic', and 'uneducated' boys 'cannot distinguish between good and bad'. '[C]ontrol your anger', he commanded, 'a human being should not react like an animal'[880] The newspaper reported on the use of the court system by older women to discipline youths.[881] In order to 'escape authority', young men increasingly sought to established fishing grounds in remote locations such as the small islands at Kabira and on the shoreline at Bugoigo near the Waiga River on the southern periphery of Bugungu.[882]

The meeting point of these various axes of contention was the institution of bridewealth. Moderately wealthy men in their thirties and forties often had six to eight wives. One such man famously had 30 surviving sons, and no idea how many daughters.[883] Cases of prolific polygny and an overall abundance of livestock, led to a shortage of wives, and therefore extremely high bridewealth expectations. In the late 1950s, the latter often consisted of 12 to 13 goats, 3 to 5 cows, one bull plus

[879] Bimbona, 'Emikaaga enyakuhinguraine omu Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 9 August 1958.
[880] J.B. Kiiza, 'Maumau n'omu Bugungu eraija', *Mwebingwa*, 7 June 1958.
[881] Int. Gungu 4c; Bimbona, 'Abanyoro okutakora amananu omu Bunyoro', *Mwebingwa*, 22 March 1958.
[882] County Chief to Omuketo 23 June 1957, HDA, FIN.19/Vol.2; 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 19 April 1958.
[883] 'General Purposes Committee', *Mugambizi*, 21 February 1958.

1,100/- to 1,500/- in cash.[884] Large bridewealth had many repercussions. Some young men, especially those with poor fathers, were unable to marry women from Bugungu; the practice of marrying Alur women dated back to pre-colonial era, but it greatly increased in the post-war period. A man could *kuswera kuwaaakaswera*, literally 'marry how you can marry', meaning that you could pay nothing or very little in the way of brideprice.[885]

When large bridewealth was on offer, there were socially destabilising consequences. Parents in Bugungu often could not resist taking their daughters out of school – if they had been there to start with – and giving them away as brides. It meant that husbands placed more onerous demands on their wives' labour, generating strains. Some husbands decided to end marriages. Some wives – especially those physically abused – ran away. Abductions were common.[886] Others bought their freedom by turning to licit or illicit entrepreneurship to refund their in-laws. At remote landing sites in southern Bugungu, women entered into relationships with fishermen beyond some of the demands of traditional marriage.[887] Many lowlanders were scandalised by these developments lamenting that broken marriages made women 'turn to prostitution'.[888]

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[884] Int. Gungu 5b; J.B Kiiza, 'Ebikaguzo hali abazaire b'abaana bahara mu Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 22 February 1958; Yozefu Tundulu, 'Abalemi ba Bugungu kinu mukirole n'aganyu', *Mwebingwa,* 23 August 1958.
[885] Int. Gungu 7a & 3b2.; Nkuba to DC, 11 October 1955, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.
[886] DCWN to DC, 3 August 1961, HDA, MIS. 12/3.
[887] Int. Gungu 14c.
[888] Bimbona, 'Emikaaga enyakuhinguraine omu Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 9 August 1958; Yozefu Tundulu, 'Abalemi ba Bugungu kinu mukirole n'aganyu', *Mwebingwa,* 23 August 1958.

It was a time of growing *itima*, or 'ill-feeling', in Bugungu, regretted Kiiza.[889] This feeling found expression in a spate of murders related to witchcraft accusations.[890] Many of the jeremiads and invectives composed by lowlanders were pervaded by a sense of impending calamity – *kiihe*. This catastrophist tendency was particularly strong among the Christian campaigners for whom bad behaviour also explained the previous disasters Bugungu had suffered.[891] Deaths on the lake and lightning strikes were 'punishments' resulting from a 'lack of fear of God', explained Kiiza. Failure to learn from them could provoke 'a curse on our area like what happened to Sodom and Gomora'.[892] 'Are you waiting for god to raise his machete?', asked another man, concerned by widespread drunkenness.[893] The country that does not have faith in God will 'perish', another warned.[894]

Ethno-civilisational competition and rank, 1958-c.1961

These internal tensions found expression in anxieties over ethno-civilisational reputation, which took on increasing significance as the timetable for independence from British rule began to accelerate in the late 1950s. Uncivilised behaviour threatened 'to spoil the name of the people of Bugungu'.[895] '[W]e have a lot of cash, and yet the upland people say we are in darkness', noted Kiiza.[896]

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[889] Kiiza, 'Aga Bugungu - Maumau n'omu Bugungu eraija', *Mwebingwa*, 7 June 1958.
[890] J.B. Kiiza, 'Abagungu bakyali omu mwirima okwesiga ebitaroho', *Mwebingwa*, 28 July 1956.
[891] J.B Kiiza, 'Ekiro kya Sunday oku kitafibwaho omu Bugungu yoona', *Mwebingwa,* 22 March 1958.
[892] J.B Kiiza, 'Abazaire n'abalemi ba Bugungu kinu mukiteho aganyu goona', *Mwebingwa,* 1 November 1958.
[893] Fideli Gafabusa, 'Abagungu amarwa muganwe muttireho orusoni', *Mwebingwa,* 8 February 1958.
[894] Bimbona, 'Akutwara ekiro omusiima bukiire', *Mwebingwa*, 12 April 1958
[895] J.B. Kiiza, 'Abagungu bakyali omu mwirima okwesiga ebitaroho', *Mwebingwa*, 28 July 1956.
[896] J.B Kiiza, 'Akatale k'ebyokulya Bulisa', *Mwebingwa,* 19 April 1958; Yozefu Tundulu, 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 1 November 1958.

BPTPA members demanded that the government pay attention: 'you need to know that the old Bugungu has ceased to exist, therefore you need to respond to us not to do as you used to do in the past', but in a manner appropriate to 'the Bugungu of today'.[897] This anxiety was also expressed by literate elites through institutional, associational forms. The student organisation BOSA had graduated in late 1958 into an organisation exclusively for 'educated' 'Bagungu'. The new organisation was sometimes rendered 'Bagungu United Association' (BUA), other times 'Bugungu United Association'. Among the other names considered were the 'Educated Bagungu Association', and the 'Bugungu Progressive Association'. BUA's constitution allowed members to use 'Lunyoro' and 'Lugungu' in meetings, but tellingly adopted English as BUA's 'official language'. BUA aimed 'to unite Bagungu' but also to guide in them in this 'world of competition and progress'. 'It is we and we only who can relieve Bugungu from those conquerable obstacles which have kept her lagging behind other parts of the country for ages', one of its leaders reminded members.[898]

Ample cause for such anxiety was given by the way outsiders talked about Bugungu. Some of those more intimately acquainted with Bugungu, such as CMS's Ridsdale, were relatively complimentary. '[A]ll Makerere [College] Nyoro are Bagungu', he reportedly told one anthropologist, before explaining their intelligence and initiative with reference to the consumption of fish.[899] But the same man also described it as 'backward and insular'.[900] The Anglican parson placed there in 1959

[897] BPTPA to DC Hoima, 1 May 1961, HDA, MIS. 12/3.
[898] 'Meeting minutes', 14 December 1958', CKP; 'Bugungu United Association Constitution 1959', 1959, CKP; Cosmas M. Kato to Committee Members [December 1960?], CKP.
[899] A.W. Southall, diary entry for 12 January 1960, RAI, MS466/1/35/2.
[900] Ridsdale to Brown, 15 April 1958, CUA, 1/85/614/2.

would be withdrawn in 1961, with Bugungu was identified for remedial measures, owing to 'lack of support from the Bagungu' who were 'reverting to the worship of money [and] beer'.[901] 'In spite of the vast sums of money earned by the fishermen they live in the most primitive huts without any sanitation', the District Medical Officer complained.[902] Fisheries Officers bemoaned 'the difficulty we have had in getting the Bagungu to produce a reasonable quality of salt fish'.[903] The catches were ' laid out to dry in the sun everywhere', amid 'goats, fowls, ducks, dogs & cows' reported an unimpressed district administrator.[904] ' The County Chief told the BPTPA that Bugungu 'very backwards in all respects'.[905]

The weight of such ideas was reinforced by what Bugungu considered to be discriminatory punishment and the withholding of services by the authorities. Lowlanders frequently offered their moral and financial support for the district government's campaign for the return of the Lost Counties.[906] Relations with the local government had to some extent improved since the indirect election saw about five BPTPA members join District Council, voting in 1959 to secure the path to direct elections in 1960.[907] But they did not feel their support was repaid through the chiefs imposed on them.[908] Even one visitor to Bugungu was

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[901] Ridsdale to Provincial Secretary, 24 October 1961, CUA, 6/Administrative/G/B/32/1.
[902] DMO, 'Medical Commentary for January 1958', 20 February 1958, HDA, MED.7/Vol.5.
[903] Stoneman to Katikiro, 23 March 1960 HDA, GAM.6/Vol.3.
[904] K.V. Arrowsmith, diary entry for 26 June 1961, RHL, MSS.Afr.s.1338(5).
[905] Mugenyi to BPTPA, 26 July 1958, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.
[906] 'Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 1 May 1956.
[907] Kwolekya, Yosama Nyamasabu, and Sebastian Kagoro became councillors in the three parishes of Bugungu; Wairindi and another Bugungu-born Protestant teacher Bijoro Bigirwa were the two councillors elected in The Bagungu Location at Kigorobya-Kitana.
[908] Bimbona, 'Abanyoro okutakora amananu omu Bunyoro', *Mwebingwa,* 22 March 1958.

surprised to see a man physically 'beaten' at Magambo's bidding on the spot over a tax dispute. 'I had not seen this anywhere else, I only saw it in Bugungu, Wanseko', he reported.[909] But a fate little better than Magambo came Bugungu's way after the mutual torment ended around the turn of 1959, when he was dismissed and convicted for handling stolen goods – a demise rumoured to have been engineered by his arch-nemesis Kaheeru.[910] Bugungu faced the imposition of successive upland chiefs. In a mid-1961 there was a Kaheeru-spearheaded BPTPA complaint against the heavy-handedness of sub-county chief, Yowana Kwebiha, claiming he was 'treating us people of Bugungu (…) quite different from the way people are administered in other sub counties in Bunyoro'.[911] Less than two weeks later, Kwebiiha faced anonymous death threats from 'the people of Bugungu' - addressed to 'Mr Bloody Gombolola', as noted wryly by touring officials.[912]

Certain resources were still being withheld or ineffectively applied. Late 1950s developmentalism had expanded the range of services that the government could reasonably be expected to provide. Tundulu wondered why no midwife was provided for 'the Bagungu', who were 'very fertile', especially when 'compared to other tribes in Bunyoro'.[913] The rains of mid-1958 confirmed the road's destruction. The DC Bunyoro declared in September 1958 that a 'truly all-weather road' needed to be completed 'once and for all' and 'at all costs', as Bugungu constituted 'by far the most productive area that has no proper road access'.[914] But the

[909] John K. Gahwerra, 'Ninsaba okuhaburwa', *Mwebingwa*, 23 August 1958.
[910] Magambo to DC Bunyoro, 16 October 1958; ADC Masindi to DC Bunyoro, 29 December 1959, HDA, MIS. 12/3; Kaheru to DC Bunyoro, 13 July 1961, HDA, MIS. 12/3.
[911] Bugungu Tax Payers Assembly to DC Hoima, 1 May 1961, HDA, MIS. 12/3.
[912] Diary of K.V. Arrowsmith, 14 May 1961, RHL, MSS.Afr.s.1338(5).
[913] Yozefu Tundulu, 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 1 November 1958.
[914] DC Bunyoro to Katikiro, 5 September 1958, HDA, COM.2/1.

Bugungu road remained 'the most difficult road in the whole district', and its improvement project 'one of the most expensive ones in the Province'.[915] Every single costly intervention by the colonial government over the next year or two only served confirm that even more outlay was required.[916] The continuing unreliability of access owing to the road undermined a great deal besides; for one thing, it made it 'most difficult to undertake any specific production development plans'.[917] The road was the most difficult collective affront to Bugungu owing to the struggles of previous years. Tundulu threatened in August 1958 that 'the Bagungu' would themselves 'collect our tax of 1959 for purposes of working on this road'.[918]

The local and colonial government made some investments in 1958-1959 in an effort to 'modernise' Wanseko.[919] But marketing challenges remained fundamentally unaddressed. Market volatility immediately before and after Congolese independence in July 1960 preceded the total collapse of fish demand amid civil strife, forcing Bugungu to develop the northern Uganda markets to which they had already begun to turn. In this context, legislation from Entebbe imposing a countrywide canoe licence fee in early 1961 was taken as a targeted assault on Bugungu; members of the, fishers' lobby group, Basohi ba Bugungu, argued that if canoes could be taxed, then why not hoes?[920]

[915] Katikiro to DC (draft), n.d. (October 1958?), HDA, COM.2/1.
[916] PS Ministry of Works to PCWP, 25 January 1960, HDA, COM.2/1.
[917] Minutes of the District Team Meeting, 8 July 1960, HDA.
[918] Yozefu Tundulu, 'Abalemi ba Bugungu kinu mukirole n'aganyu', *Mwebingwa*, 23 August 1958.
[919] Crutchfield to Posnett, 4 February 1958, HDA, GAM.6/Vol.2
[920] Basohi ba Bugungu to Katikiro, 1 March 1961, HDA, MIS. 12/3.

A growing sense of British panic in regard to wildlife conservation in the twilight of the protectorate rule, meant that collectivising punishments continued to form part of game policy, and continued to inspire agitation. In early 1958, residents again demanded the abolition of the sanctuary, but the authorities refused to give up this source of leverage, especially while the park continued to come under attack from illegal hunting from Bugungu; the protectorate government responded by trying again to force a deal on Fort Magungu.[921] Demands for a second game guard for Bugungu were made: 'we the Bagungu are not ready to cultivate [crops] for animals', Tundulu complained; 'we pay taxes like other people'.[922] Over the next few years the anti-Sanctuary mission was to be championed by the BUA, who claimed that the destructiveness of game meant that 'the word Sanctuary' was the 'root of restlessness among the inhabitants'.[923]

In the late 1950s, UNP began to make its presence felt in Bugungu. This new, armed antagonist had familiar proclivities and priorities. Charles Donald 'Bombo' Trimmer, the colonial military veteran who became warden of Murchison Falls National Park in 1957, had initially taken a relatively gentle approach in Bugungu, permitting canoes in some of the best fishing grounds – just inside the park's riverine boundary.[924] But Trimmer quickly withdrew this privilege as South Asian capitalists' investments in crocodile expeditions drove hunters further and further up the Victoria Nile to Murchison Falls itself where an extraordinary number of

[921] 'G.P.C. Bugungu', *Mugambizi*, 28 February 1958; Crawford to Omukama, 5 March 1958, HDA, GAM.3; Mugenyi to Katikiro, 16 February 1960, HDA, ADM.9/1.
[922] Yozefu Tundulu, 'Aga Bugungu', *Mwebingwa,* 1 November 1958.
[923] The Bagungu United Association to the Game Warden, 11 January 1961, CKP
[924] Rubeni Wandira and Yohana Bitadu (Gombolola members) to Fisheries Officer, 24 November 1957, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.; Fisheries Officer (Stoneman) to DC Bunyoro, 20 December 1957, HDA, MIS. 12/3 Vol.2.

crocodiles were to be found.[925] Trimmer relaxed the rules again on a 'good neighbour basis' in early 1959 owing to signs that crocodile poaching had stopped. But the fishing ban was reinstituted after many an 'example of non-cooperation by the Bagungu' in relation to hippo snaring, and a 'serious outbreak' of crocodile poaching in late 1959.[926] '[T]he Bagungu' were 'no longer the Warden's white haired boys'.[927] Lack of rain in early 1961 triggered demands for 'the Bagungu' – who were 'about to die' – to be allowed to grow crops on the immediate fertile banks of the Nile. But UNP rebuffed these requests.[928]

Anxieties about the civilisational meanings of continued punishment began to be expressed by Gungu writers in the language of political tribalism. 'I ask Bagungu to (…) be aware that people have started encroaching on our area,' one *Mwebingwa* contributor warned, 'and the lake might be taken away from us'. '[R]ich people will (…) come, people who have money like beans' and they will 'pay for expensive licences, which a Mugungu fisherman cannot afford to pay'.[929] One touring colonial official in 1959 noted that during meetings held in Bugungu the 'Bagungu appeared suspicious about everything done or introduced by non-Bagungu".[930]

The 'non-Bagungu' that tended to constitute a threat in the eyes of lowland literate elites were not the '*Abaruru*' (Alur). The latter continued to be seen as lowly 'badly off'; subject to a mixture of pity and disregard.[931] The women served

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[925] 'The Western Province Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1958', MDA, BOX 618.
[926] UP, *RATUNP 1958*-1959 (Entebbe, 1959), p. 13; UNP, Report for the quarter ending 31st December, 1959, SIA, Fullerton, HKBP/BOX 11.
[927] Fisheries Officer Stoneman to DC Bunyoro, 5 January 1960, HDA, GAM.11.
[928] Stefano A. Kiiza, 'Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 6 May 1961.
[929] Bimbona, 'Akutwara ekiro omusiima bukiire', *Mwebingwa,* 12 April 1958.
[930] 28.5.59, BTB3.
[931] Bimbona, 'Akutwara ekiro omusiima bukiire', *Mwebingwa*, 12 April 1958.

as cheap brides, and the men lived in appalling conditions in around the fishing village at Wanseko, selling their labour to boat-owners.[932] Their presence was essential to the economy, and became even more so after the Congo crisis of 1960 which had forced some to take refuge in Bugungu. The Congo crisis also provided an obstacle, and an indirect solution, in regard to agricultural production, as it cut off supplies of cassava from Mahagi Port, but provided the labour to cultivate it in Bugungu. Ardently agriculturalist Congo Alur joined the established settlements – that served as a buffer against park – around the eastern hinterland village of Ngwedo.[933] These settlers grew cotton for cash and cassava to trade on the lakeshore, or sold their labour in gardens or landing sites.[934] They were welcomed by the Bunyoro local government keen to increase taxpayers and nostalgically fixated on the idea of multi-ethnic imperial past; the katikiro averred that 'the Banyoro feel a special responsibility to some of the tribes bordering Lake Albert who belonged to Bunyoro in times before British rule'.[935]

But other arrivals were not viewed in such an innocuous light. An anonymous writer took to the newspaper to beg his 'fellow Bagungu' to become awake to the threat – to 'open up your eyes and look at your port, Wanseko'. 'Bahindi started their trade in Bugungu [when] we were not aware about trade(...)', he lamented', '[t]hey surrounded and exploited us!'[936] Bugungu 'was always being oppressed by foreigners', claimed Kiiza, 'a Muhindi (...) look[s] down upon us and exploits us'.[937]

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[932] P.B. Ridsdale to Provincial Secretary, 24 October 1961, CUA, 6/Administrative/G/B/32/1
[933] Ints. Alur 1, 8, 3.
[934] Int. Alur 4.
[935] 'Bunyoro prepares for influx of Congo refugees', *Uganda Argus*, 16 June 1960.
[936] By'omuhandiki waitu owa Bugungu, 'Abahindi mu Bugungu', *Mwebingwa*, 20 July 1957.
[937] J.B. Kiiza, 'Ekiija omanyire kitwara bike', *Mwebingwa*, 12 July 1958.

Quotidian wrangles between South Asian shopkeepers and their customers ending in 'costly litigation' fed into tensions over race and control of urban space.[938] The booming fishing village of Wanseko increasingly represented the epicentre of this struggle in Bugungu.

Conclusion

The project of ethno-civilisational reassessment, reformation and reinvention that had begun to gather momentum a few years earlier, was increasing and clearly powerfully articulated by a new educated elite among the Gungu from the early 1950s. Figures conversant in the language of 'tribe' and eager to make themselves known took to the pages of the vibrant new Runyoro press in order to conjure both a political community worthy of civilisational esteem and a moral community demanding urgent civilisational attention. For many both within and without, Bugungu remained barbarous – an assessment only reinforced by the types and degrees of consumption that the fishing industry supported. Putative ethno-civilisational inferiority still demanded, and was demarcated through, classificatory violence. As British rule drew to a close, collectivising punishment remained a differential and differentiating tool of governance that sharpening collective loyalties and experiences of degradation even if the resources and ambitions of late colonial developmentalism promised to consign these impulses to the past.

[938] 4.3.58, BTB.

CHAPTER SEVEN: *Corporate hierarchy: the business of ethno-civilisationalism in Bugungu, c. 1961-1970*

> 'Bugungu is far ahead in terms of money (...). I ask the Bagungu to form an association based on our business (...) to take our area Bugungu to a higher level'.[939]

The 1960s witnessed a new type of ethno-civilisational work led by Bugungu's most highly credentialed men. While political activists in other parts of the country continued to channel their entrepreneurial energies into the cerebral tasks of writing ethno-histories, codifying customs and language, Bugungu's educated elites and their associations conspicuously refrained. Instead, they sought to reorder putative ethno-civilisational hierarchies and transform stereotypes through a different collective undertaking. While individual entrepreneurialism had made Bugungu far richer than anywhere else in Bunyoro, now educated elites promoted an ethnically-flavoured brand of corporate capitalism as a means by which to not only dominate and control the lowlands, but also to elevate their collective reputational standing, and to civilise their Gungu fellows. While the African nationalist policy of nurturing a class of African traders in the 1960s was met with much contemporaneous analysis, the

[939] Yozefu Tundulu, 'Abalemi ba Bugungu kinu mukirole n'aganyu', *Mwebingwa*, 23 August 1958.

relationship between ethnicity, ideas of civilisational hierarchy, and corporate capitalism in Uganda's politics has tended to be overlooked.[940]

The road to a higher level, 1962-1965

As Bugungu approached its final twelve months of British rule, it was hit with disastrous weather. [941] In the second half of 1961, fishing was brought to a standstill in some areas as the heaviest rains for 45 years was followed, from October onwards, by the ensuing rise in lake level – an exceptional fifteen feet – which submerged the beaches suitable for seining. Wanseko was like a 'deserted place', as it was 'ten years ago', noted one complainant seeking assistance. '[W]e have lost all our business, live-stock and houses. We have no money since we have nowhere to sell our meagre catch of fish.'[942] The rain also compounded marketing issues for any products. Bugungu as a whole was only reachable by water in November 1961.[943] As Uganda entered 1962, the Lake Albert fishing industry faced 'unusual difficulties'. Catches were down, and the Congo market remained low or non-existent.[944]

But Bugungu had grown in political stature in the District Council. Bugungu's councillors were divided along religious-political party lines, particularly initially. In the 1960 District Council election, some councillors had won on Democratic Party tickets, others on that of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) – the party that had grown out of the UNC. But in the highly factional politics of Bunyoro's plateau, one upland bloc associated with Masindi and another with Hoima had

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[940] A.G. Hopkins, 'Big business in African Studies', *JAH* 28 (1987) pp. 119-140 (135).
[941] 'The havoc of Lake Albert', *Uganda Argus*, 9 January 1962.
[942] Elkana to Minister of Local Government, 7 December 1961, HDA, MIS. 12/3.
[943] 23.11.61, BTB3.
[944] 'Bunyoro District Annual Report – 1962', 1963, MDA.

long fought each other over Bunyoro's development resources, political and administrative offices, and other forms of patronage. Bugungu had emerged as a decisive third force.[945]

This growing political influence began to show fruit in the form of game policy. In a move that was largely symbolic, but highly meaningful in Bugungu, in late 1961 Game officials were convinced by the district government to drop the Sanctuary status. Facing difficulties controlling licensed hunting between the Sonso and Waiga rivers at the southermost extreme of Bugungu, the Game Department agreed to an exchange for another status – 'Controlled Hunting Area' (CHA), covering the entirety of Bugungu. The council's General Purposes Committee 'unanimously agreed' to this change as the CHA offered a less overt type of protection for wildlife and promised to generate considerable local government revenues. The CHA represented an exclusive hunting zone where a carefully monitored annual quota of game was available to be shot under special permits for which the fees were 'relatively high'. Bukumi-Bugungu Controlled Hunting Area, as it was to be known, was proclaimed in February 1962.[946]

While it was a time of rebuilding for a devastated fishing industry, the years immediately following independence in October 1962 was a time of growing optimism, pride, and self-confidence in terms of educational, professional, and political attainments. Political rewards started to materialise even more clearly in the second half of 1963. DP and independent councillors from Bugungu formed part of a larger wave of defections to the UPC, which had come to power at the

[945] Int. Gungu 16a.
[946] 'Minutes of the general purposes committee meeting held in Burangi, Hoima on 7th, 8th, and 14th December, 1961', on microfilm, MULAS.

centre. As was the case across the country, Bunyoro's Kingdom Government was controlled by the party that controlled central government. Under the terms of the 1962 Independence Constitution, four ministries were devolved to the semi-federal Bunyoro Kingdom Government. Though Bugungu lay on the Masindi-side of the district in geographical terms, its bloc's councillors alliance with Metusera T. Katuramu's Hoima UPC faction enabled the latter to control the district government.[947]

There were rewards for this support. In August 1963, the newly-elected Katikiro Katuramu selected lowlander Yowasi Bijoro Bigirwa as Minister of Social Services and Education while four other lowland councillors succeeded in gaining places across the Education Committee and the Trade Development Committee. The *Uganda Argus* reported on a party organised by the 'Bagungu tribe' in Bigirwa's honour.[948] With UPC in the ascendancy in the district, the Ndandamire headteacher joined the party from the DP in August 1964, Amid manipulation and irregularities, every part of Bugungu returned UPC councillors in October 1964, and Tundulu received the Deputy Speakership, as a sop to the Catholics.[949]

[947] Int. Gungu 16a; Roger Southall, 'Interview with Mr. J. Kakonge, 5 July 1971', SOAS, MS 380513, Box 1/5.
[948] 'At Masindi', *Uganda Argus,* 17 August 1963.
[949] Roger Southall, 'Interview with Eliphaz Akiiki-Jusi Kamara, 15 February 1971', SOAS, MS 380513, Box 1/5.

Figure 32: Y.B. Bigirwa (far left, sitting), Y.G. Tundulu (left, standing), (1964).[950]

Bugungu's councillors increasing carried away on a wave of what one researcher called 'district nationalism', which intensified in 1963-1964 owing to the campaign for the return of the Lost Counties from Buganda. No lowlanders seem to have featured heavily in this campaign before independence; among the 93 memoranda the Privy Councillors in London received on the matter of the Lost Counties during a commisison of inquiry, not one came from the lowlands.[951] The matter was rendered largely irrelevant by its remoteness from Bugungu. '[T]hose things were very far from us', recalled one informant.[952] But after independence, councillors from Bugungu made frequent public statements emphasising support for this campaign; and for Nyoro unity.[953] Even while the Lost Counties 'siphoned off' finances and time, it served as a unifying cause right up until victory in the

[950] From 'Bunyoro ministers', *Uganda Argus*, 28 November 1964.
[951] Great Britain, *Uganda : report of a commission of Privy Counsellors on a dispute between Buganda and Bunyoro* (London, 1962).
[952] Int. Gungu 7a.
[953] 'Appeal to Banyoro', *Uganda Argus,* 27 July 1964.

referendum on the matter in late 1964.[954] The sense of unity in Bunyoro was powerfully expressed through Bigirwa's social ties; he later acted as best man at the wedding of a member of the Hoima's educated elite. [955]

Figure 33: Y.B. Bigirwa (sitting, second from left) as best man for a Hoima groom (1965). [956]

These businesses continued to be undergirded by production in Bugungu itself. In 1964, with fishermen availing of government fishing boat subsidy scheme, the fishing industry was beginning to reach levels of activity that had last been seen before the flood.[957] The Congo market again collapsed that year owing to the outbreak of the Simba Rebellion, led by Pierre Mulele, who had been education minister in the government of murdered premier Patrice Lumumba. But demand in Uganda continued to rise considerably. 'Thriving' Wanseko served as a distribution centre for fish from other landing sites, like Butiaba and those even further south, to various growing markets in West Nile and Acholi.[958] In 1965 the

[954] Fred G. Burke, *Local government and politics in Uganda* (Syracuse, 1964), p. 108.
[955] 'People in Uganda', *Uganda Argus*, 24 September 1965.
[956] Photograph from 'People in Uganda', *Uganda Argus*, 24 September 1965.
[957] Ochwo, 'Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report 1964', HDA, ADM.14/64.
[958] Kyomya, 'Fisheries Annual Report – 1964', 1965, HDA, ADM.14/64.

fishing industry had almost recovered to the pre-flood intensity; as a fall in the water level enabled the use of more seine nets, the Congo market reopened.[959] The 'focal point' for the fishing industry at the north end of Lake Albert, Wanseko was one of the most important fishing villages in Uganda, if not the whole of East Africa. Luo fisherman from western Kenya's fishing grounds on Lake Victoria had shipped their modern style boats by rail to Pakwach, and then by water to Wanseko, where they caught, grilled and smoked fish – mainly *Alestes* – before sending it to their home district in Kenya.[960]

The fishing industry was supported in terms of food and labour largely by Congolese sources, as had often been the case in the past. The 'Mulele War', as it was known locally, sent growing numbers of refugees to Bugungu in the final four months of 1964.[961] Efforts to introduce mandatory encampment in late 1964 were even less successful than they were elsewhere in the country at this time. [962] In early 1965 there were claims of one hundred unreported new arrivals daily, at Wanseko, with some going on to join their relatives elsewhere in the country, but some not.[963] But the Bunyoro Local Government, generally concerned by 'the smallness of its declining population' took a lax attitude to immigration at this

[959] 'Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report – 1965', 1966, MDA, loose file without cover.
[960] Aerni, 'Man and wildlife', p. 28.
[961] Kamuturaki to ADC Masindi, 23 September 1964, HDA; Kakoka (County chief Bujenje) to PS to the Katikiro, 23 December 1964, HDA.
[962] DC Bunyoro to PS Ministry of Planning & Community Development, 13 October 1964, HDA; DC Bunyoro to County Chief Bujenje, 30 December 1964, HDA; DC Bunyoro to the PS to the Katikiro, 17 December 1964, HDA. For other attempts to introduce mandatory encampment in Uganda from this period, see Ashley Brooke Rockenbach, 'Accounting for the past: a history of refugee management in Uganda, 1959–64', in Kristin Bergtora Sandvik, Katja Lindskov Jacobsen (eds.), *UNHCR and the Struggle for Accountability Technology, law and results-based management* (London, 2016), pp. 91-103.
[963] Z.K. Nsaja (ADC Bunyoro) to DC Bunyoro, 18 February, 1965, HDA, ADM 9.

time.[964] As had so often been the case going as far back as the pre-colonial era, the self-settled refugees continued to be welcomed. The new arrivals continued to provide much-needed casual labour – for fishing, farming, and construction – but also took up land which enabled them to provide food, which otherwise the fishing camps had to obtain from across the water, sometimes at great expense, as even there it was in short supply. Many refugees had joined earlier Alur pioneers who had settled on Bugungu's agricultural frontier around Ngwedo near the park boundary under a village chief called Kezeroni Wanzala, who was the son of an Alur woman.[965] Although wont to occasionally complain of their 'subjugation' on the shoreline, they generally constituted a politically docile part of Bugungu.[966] Though the vast majority of this community were Catholics, few aligned themselves with the DP; they were devoted to Obote.[967]

There were still 'attitudes of cultural superiority' directed from the core to the periphery, according to anthropologist Simon Charlsey. [968] This was increasingly less the case in regard to Bugungu than it was the north-east where Charlsey conducted his fieldwork. Bunyoro Kingdom celebrated and even appropriated certain Gungu markers of cultural difference – such as the *kikwele* hunting dance – were celebrated, admired and even appropriated as Nyoro cultural performances.[969] At any rate, any Nyoro hauteur was met with manifestations of Bugungu's growing confidence. Swaggering young lowland men in the early-to-

[964] S. R. Charsley, 'The Formation of Ethnic Groups', in A. Cohen (ed.), *Urban Ethnicity* (London, 1974), pp. 337-368 (p. 340).
[965] Int. Alur 14.
[966] Luo Acholi Aluru to various, 1 September 1964, UNA, OPC, BOX 21/PML/C.59.
[967] Hoima Mission Diary, 17 April 1960, A.G.M.Afr., D.OR.168.
[968] S. R. Charsley, 'The Formation of Ethnic Groups', in A. Cohen (ed.), *Urban Ethnicity* (London, 1974), pp. 337-368 (p. 340).
[969] 'A lively concert', *Uganda Argus,* 28 January 1964.

mid 1960s adopted a jokey ethnic slogan *bintu biloho*, meaning that '[in Bugungu] things are there', i.e. 'we have riches', defining themselves in contradistinction to the impoverished people of the plateau. The phrase was popularised by Eriya Byenkya, who became Permanent Secretary in Bunyoro's Ministry of Finance in 1964. He reportedly derided his upland colleagues: "You people, you Bagahya! The poorest man in Bugungu has at least a goat at home; you don't have even a hen!"'.[970]

A government publication shortly after independence drew special attention to 'the Bagungu fishermen' for making their sub-county the 'wealthiest' in Bunyoro.[971] But officials largely tended to disparage the state of the lowlands. Bunyoro's katikiro warned the people of Bugungu to stop importing goods bought from Congo without permission.[972] Health officials condemned the 'awful state' of sanitation in Wanseko, declaring it a 'losing battle'.[973] Taking an increasingly hard line in terms of canoe confiscations, UNP's new chief warden, a former colonial policeman called Roger Wheater, increased the pressure on the crocodile hunting expeditions demanded by skin buyers of South Asian origin. Wheater condemned the local attitude towards poaching: 'it is obvious that the Chiefs in the Bugungu area have no interest whatsoever in the maintenance of Law and Order in respect of offences related to the National Park.'[974] Outgoing British officials demanded for an 'improvement' in the 'administrative machinery' which allowed people to

[970] Ints. Gungu 3a2, 3a1, & 4d.
[971] Douglas Brown, *An introduction to the economy of Uganda* (Entebbe, 1963), p. 43.
[972] 'Minutes of the Rukurato of Bunyoro-Kitara, Friday 17th and Saturday 18th May 1963', on microfilm, MULAS.
[973] District Health Inspector Bunyoro to DMO, 'Annual Report 1962-1963', 15 July 1963, HDA, MED.7/1.
[974] Wheater to ADC Y. Kaduyu, 21 March 1963, MDA, Box 515/GAM.2; DC Bunyoro to Katikiro, 18 April 1963, MDA, Box 515/GAM.2.

settle in Ngwedo 'for the sole purpose of poaching'. The Briton's African replacements condemned Wanseko as a 'haphazard' 'hide-out for criminals and vagrants'.[975]

Figure 34: Dugout canoes seized by UNP (c. 1961).[976]

But it was ethno-civilisational esteem that mattered more to the people of Bugungu in these years. Several former members of BOSA-BUA had secured prestigious white collar jobs. Among these associations' former office-holders were Yosaamu Hannington, Mugenyi Kaseegu, a civil servant in Uganda's Ministry of Mines who had studied at Budo and the UK; Stefano Kizige, the headmaster of Catholic Nyamigisa Junior Secondary School in Masindi; the latter's brother, Cosmas Matongo Kato who was a sub-county chief; and Daniel Wanzala, a Standard Bank worker who had graduated from St Mary's College

[975] Addendum to Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report 1964', HDA, ADM.14/64; Z.K. Nsaja (ADC Bunyoro) to DC Bunyoro, 18 February 1965, HDA, ADM 9.
[976] From RWP.

Kisubi near Entebbe. Other young men had secured scholarships for higher education at Kampala's Makerere, Tanganyika's Dar-es-Salaam, and even further afield.[977] Bugungu's educated women also raised eyebrows near and far in this period by forming 'the Banyoro Bagungu Ladies Committee' in Hoima Town. The Committee worked towards the 'abolition of bridewealth' and the establishment of 'recognised status for women', a British anthropologist heard while conducting fieldwork in Kampala.[978]

Civilisational credentials were demonstrated by the *way* one made money. Rich lowlanders increasingly invested in businesses away from fish. Sole proprietorships owned by rich, unlettered individuals mushroomed particularly after independence.[979] These years provided a particularly propitious environment for Bugungu's indigenous capitalists. The government's first five-year economic development plan, heavily influenced by the World Bank, stressed the need for the diversification of the country's economy and the reduction of dependence on its main cash crops, but also the creation of a cadre of African professional managers. The government promised to replace the South Asians with 'African tycoons'.[980] The parastatal Uganda Development Corporation in mid-1963 created a subsidiary called African Business Promotion Ltd (ABP Ltd) in co-operation with the government's Trade Development Section to supply credit

[977] Katikiro to Uganda Shell Co. Ltd, 23 March 1963, HDA, EDU.15/Vol 2.
[978] David Parkin, 'Social structure and social change in a tribally heterogeneous East African city ward', unpublished PhD thesis (University of London, 1965), pp. 132-133.
[979] 'African traders seek more aid', *Uganda Argus*, 28 February 1963.
[980] 'African tycoons essential', *Uganda Argus*, 8 April 1964.

and other facilities to aid the foundation of trading companies unable to access these services through normal channels.[981]

The person tasked with nurturing these capitalist enterprises in Bunyoro was the Assistant Trade Development Officer – a role that the ex-BOSA-BUA leader Wanzala took up in 1963. With support from his office, Bugungu was in 1964 home to the best performing of the district's five active traders associations. Every fortnight they were buying goods valued at between Shs. 10,000/= and Shs. 20,000/= and purchased a seven-ton lorry.[982] A business called Tubyokiri, meaning 'we are waking up', had been established under a partnership structure in 1964 by a couple of dozen educated elites from Bugungu from primary teachers, to private dispensers, to central government ministerial assistants, most of whom had been members of BOSA-BUA alongside Wanzala. Tubyokiri had acquired a maize meal mill and large shop, but also a hotel.[983]

The catastrophic floods that had submerged Wanseko had provided openings in the transportation business. In late 1962, the *Robert Coryndon* service between Pakwach and Butiaba Port was terminated by EAR&H. But there was still huge demand from passengers wanting to cross the north end of the Lake. Owners of motor-powered boats in 1963-1964 competed almost to the point of physical violence over these passengers – most of whom were male labour migrants from West Nile and Congo. In an effort to ameliorate tensions between competing

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[981] George R. Bosa, *The financing of small-scale enterprises in Uganda* (Nairobi, 1969); 'New company to help Africans in business', *Uganda Argus*, 27 April 1964; 'Message for traders', *Uganda Argus*, 29 May 1965.
[982] E.T.A. Ochwo, DC Bunyoro, 'Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report 1964', HDA, ADM.14/64.
[983] Wanzala, 'Bunyoro District Annual Report [Trade Development]', 10 March 1965, HDA, ADM.14/64; Kizige to promoter members of Tubyokiri Ltd, 16 July 1965, CKP.

parties, some three men proposed to pool some of their money in order to buy a larger boat which they could collectively operate.[984]

With Wanzala's advice and encouragement, ownership was opened up beyond boat owners to other men – mainly fishermen who could afford a share for 1,000/-. Operating with administrative assistance from educated young relatives, these men in September 1964 registered Bugungu Ltd with 50 Gungu men as shareholders. Educated young relatives and friends were enlisted to register the company and to keep its paperwork in order. The company purchased a couple of large, modern motorboats and were charging 50/- per Wanseko-Panyimur ferry journey. At the end of the first year, they made a net profit of Sh. 68,000/. 'Money started pouring in like water', recalled one of the founders. [985]

Corporate hierarchies and takeovers in 'wild' Bugungu, 1965-1968

As 1965 became 1966, concerns about Bugungu's disorder intensified. The war escalated between UNP and lowland poachers. UNP organisation had acquired an aircraft for aerial reconnaissance, and an amphicar to patrol the waters.[986] Dozens of canoes and prisoners were caught in a series of combined air-water patrols, sometimes in co-ordination with the Uganda Police and the Special Force Police.[987] But most official energies beyond UNP, were increasingly focused on the 'non-Ugandans' among the African population.[988] The newly appointed Game

[984] Int. Gungu 16a; Kosia Bahoire, 'Ntandikwa gya kampuni gya Bugungu Limited', n.d. (early 2000s), KBP.
[985] Int. Gungu 16a; Bahoire, 'Ntandikwa'.
[986] UNP, *RATUNP 1966-1967* (Entebbe, 1967), p. 8.
[987] Aerni, 'Man and wildlife', pp. 31-33.
[988] 'Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report – 1966', MDA.

Warden of the Lake Albert Range, J.K. Mawanda, took an intense dislike to the state of affairs in Bunyoro in general, but he very quickly reserved particular contempt for the Congolese settlers on the park boundary.[989] By the end of 1965 the Bunyoro Local Game Committee – comprising of central government officials as well as district councillors – had recommended turning the Bugungu Controlled Hunting Area into a Game Reserve so as 'to keep people away who had started settling'.[990]

In the last few months of 1966 the Game Warden stirred officialdom in Bunyoro into action on this matter with detailed descriptions that cast Bugungu's hinterland as a scene of total disorder owing to these 'quite uncontrollable' settlers. 'Poaching to these Congolese is (...) in-borne (*sic*) habit ', he warned the DC. '[T]hese people have settled themselves wherever and as they want. I very much doubt whether they ever pay taxes', he added. 'I have a feeling that if forced to settle in one place, given Chiefs of their own mentality and perhaps tribe, better control and less trouble would be achieved'.[991] During an investigation into the matter at the start of September 1966, Mawanda led a tour of Kasenyi and Ngwedo villages by several central and local government officials, including Bunyoro's Finance Minister, and his Permanent Secretary Byenkya, The party were soon convinced by Mawanda that 'disastrous havoc' had broken loose . Not only was their ample evidence in the forms of skins brazenly exhibited outside the house of the self-proclaimed leader of the settlers, the encroachment of these people had led to 'the destruction of the famous Fort Magungu', which was located in the

[989] J.K. Mawanda Game Warden Lake Albert Range to various, 11 October 1965, MDA, Box 515/GAM.2.
[990] E.T.A. Ochwo, DC Bunyoro, 'Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report 1965', HDA.
[991] J.K. Mawanda Game Warden Lake Albert Range to F.M. Waiswa DC Bunyoro, 22 August 1966, HDA.

hunters' 'corridor' to the park. [992] In preparation for action to be taken against these settlers, Mawanda in co-ordination with local chiefs, mustered a list of 862 people living near the park boundary, and recommended a meeting be held 'immediately' to decide on measures to 'rectify this deplorable situation' and to rescue 'this famous revenue producing area'.[993]

Officials' concerns about the Congolese were soon expressed with greater frequency in regard to Wanseko. The opening of the Congo market, saw a rush of Congolese fish buyers at the beginning of the year, and illegal buying by unlicensed dealers became evident to officials.[994] Vsiting Wanseko, UPC government deputy Minister S.W. Uringi, who hailed from the Ugandan Alur highlands in West Nile, warned that immigrants 'were allowed to stay on condition that they abided by the rules here, and followed this country's motto of work for progress'.[995] The central government took a harder line, instituting a discriminatory licensing regime through passing new fishing rules into law in 1966. [996] Non-Ugandans had to pay eleven times the fee that Ugandans paid from this point on. Bunyoro Kingdom Government also took steps, to bring the 'uncontrollable' Congolese to heel. In late 1966, it ordered chiefs to provide information on the number of foreigners in their areas.[997] Aiding administrative control in Bugungu was a man who hailed from the sub-county, Perez Isingoma. He became the first to hold the Bugungu sub-county chieftainship since Festo

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[992] J.K. Mawanda Game Warden Lake Albert Range to PS for Katikirto, 16 September October 1966, MDA, Box 515/GAM.2.
[993] J.K. Mawanda Game Warden Lake Albert Range to PS for Katikirto, 16 September October 1966, MDA, Box 515/GAM.2.
[994] 'Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report – 1966', 1967, MDA.
[995] 'Minister meets fishermen', *Uganda Argus*, 18 October 1966.
[996] Ag. Fisheries Officer Kyomya to all fisheries assistants, 6 January 1965, HDA.
[997] Y.B. Bantebya (Ag. PS Ministry of Finance Bunyoro Kingdom Government) to County Chiefs, 4 November 1966, HDA.

Magambo's exit almost a decade previously. The following year the central government decided that all refugees living outside gazetted settlements needed to be registered, and to have their origins recorded.[998] UNP only encouraged the xenophobia, with Wheater complaining that it was 'paradoxical' that 'local chiefs are allowing numbers of Congolese to take over Bunyoro land in the Bugungu area'.[999] These people had settled near or in several cases within, the park yards, carrying illegal firearms.

Complaints against Congolese were made by a new generation of BOSA elites to the central government in late 1966.[1000] But as tensions grew concerning 'foreigners', the exclusivist ethnic association life in Bugungu took on a commercial guise. After resigning from his Assistant Trade Development Officer post in 1965 to become the Managing Director of Bugungu Ltd, Wanzala embarked on folding the elite trading partnership Tubyokiri into Bugungu Ltd. This amalgamation constitued a commercial but also a political endeavour: it was a means to wrest the lowlands from the hands of the South Asians and other Africans. Bugungu Ltd diverged from extant models for corporate activity. A decade before had seen the rise of the co-operative movement in the sphere of the district's marketing societies. With substantial redistributive objectives, the Bunyoro Growers Co-operative Union (BGCU) had been founded by the local government as powerful, central union for all of the district's local crop marketing societies. But the ethnic character of these entities was undercut by their

[998] A.K.K. Mubanda (PS Ministry of Regional Administration), All Chief Executive Officers, 9 January 1967, HDA.
[999] Roger J. Wheater, 'The need for Sympathetic Land Use in Areas adjoining NPs', 1967, RWP; UNP, *RATUNP 1966-1967* (Entebbe, 1967), p. 8.
[1000] E.E. Wako (PS Ministry of Culture and Community Development) to Katikiro, 1 October 1966, HDA.

inclusivity. Co-operatives like BGCU were democratic organisations with open membership, even if some of its constituent parts, like Byamani cotton group in Bugungu, and the 'Palwo-caa Growers Co-operative Society Ltd' reflected ethnic differences.[1001] Even stakes in the plateau's manifestations of corporate capitalism were available to anyone, at a price; the wholesale trading firm, Bunyoro Agahikaine Ltd led by the BGCU's President, Yona B. Majara, was registered in 1964 as a public company. But Bugungu Limited was made exclusively for Gungu investors.[1002]

But the outward-oriented ethno-civilisational impulses were mirrored internally. It was seen by Wanzala as a means to ameliorate certain kinds of intra-comunal tensions between different social groups in Gungu society. It was of course only open to the wealthy – those who could afford to buy a stake. But like BOSA-BUA, Bugungu Ltd sought to 'unite the Bagungu', as one of its founders recalled.[1003] It sought to transcend locality, and Christian denomination, which continued to be a source of political division even if ex-DP Catholics were now publicly UPC supporters. But the educated elites also saw Bugungu Ltd as a means to surmount differences in educational status, which to a certain extent corresponded with different generations of lowland men. As Wanzala and some of his fellow educated men saw it, the new Bugungu Ltd represented a means by which to civilise – and allowing the market to civilise – the ways of the less educated men. From 1967, at Wanzala's request, Bugungu Ltd's received tutelary assistance from Kampala's Management Training and Advisory Centre (MTAC), which had been

[1001] B. Kyamiza, Ag. Co-operative Officer Bunyoro, 'Bunyoro District Monthly Report for September 1967', 2 October 1967, HDA.
[1002] Int. Gungu 4a2 & 5a.
[1003] Int. Gungu 7a.

created a year earlier by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the United Nations International Labour Organisation (ILO). Though the ILO's mandate is the protection of working people and the promotion of their human and labour rights, its Ugandan 'modernisation' initiative was a clear example of its liberal anti-communist agenda in the decolonising world. The MTAC aimed to provide entrepreneurs with advisory services – such as feasibility studies – and technical training, as well as preparing Ugandans for managerial positions.[1004]

Figure 35: Wanzala with a UN ILO advisor outside the Bugungu Ltd's headquarters in Wanseko (1967).[1005]

Bugungu Ltd expanded at an incredible rate. For a short time in the mid-to-late 1960s, it was the major commercial force in Bunyoro. As well as continuing to provide transport on Lake Albert, the company had acquired a lorry and branched out into trade, selling fishing and boat equipment such as nets and anchors. Bugungu Ltd also acquired another hotel, more boats, shops (including premises

[1004] 'Management training centre aims at boosting productivity', *Uganda Argus*, 8 November 1966 'Uganda Management Training and Advisory Center: Interim Report', March 1971, UNILO Archives, Geneva.
[1005] UNILO supplement in *Uganda Argus*, 6 April 1967.

in Masindi and Hoima towns), a petrol station, and a cattle ranch. With about three dozen employees on its books, the company soon dominated wholesale and retail trade across much of Bunyoro District. NTC granted the company coveted sub-distributorships for consumer products such as sugar, cement, salt, and sauce-pans. It was also appointed wholesale distribution agent over Agahikaine for Bell beer.[1006] This rapid expansion and diversification owed much to outside support aimed to increase the share of commerce in African hands. In terms of the advice, loans, and credit facilities available to capitalist enterprise from state and transnational sources, Bugungu Ltd received the help of credit guarantee facilities provided by African Business Promotions Ltd (ABPL) – which was in 1966-1967 to merge with the Trade Development Section, forming into the National Trading Corporation (NTC).

The years 1967-1968 witnessed the height of the lowlanders' efforts to destablise ethno-civilisational hierarchies. A degree of normalisation had occurred in regard to the sphere of local and central government policy which went some way to addressing some of the legacies of older practices of collectivising punishment. Though the powers of the sub-county chief had been very much curtailed under constitutional reforms, it was of enormous symbolic value if nothing else that the government had appointed a man from Bugungu to this office. Furthermore, the all-weather road was completed around the end of 1967. These years also witnessed a shift in Bugungu's legal status. Disputes over the park and demands for fencing to prevent animals disturbing human settlements were to continue; but the Control Hunting Area (CHA) was abolished by the government in 1968.

[1006] 'Banyoro get advice on trade', *Uganda Argus*, 3 November 1966; UPC Bunyoro, 'Briefings to His Excellency', n.d. (but 1968), UNA, OPC, BOX 21/PML/C.59.

Settlement closer and closer to the park boundary – largely by Congolese farmers – meant that the CHA was 'no longer of value', complained Wheater.[1007] It had become full of agriculture and livestock. In an effort to save the feeding grounds of wildlife in the swamps of the south-eastern hinterland of Bugungu, the government converted 518 square kilometres between the escarpment and Waiga River to a Game Reserve. But this area remained largely peripheral and free of settlement at this time.[1008] In the same year, a new maternity hospital was opened in Bugungu.[1009] Home to fanatical UPC-supporters, Bugungu granted Obote a rapturous reception when he arrived during his April 1968 visit.[1010]

These years witnessed the peak of Bugungu's ethno-civilisational standing in the eyes of the upland population. A self-identifying Munyoro from Hoima noted admiringly in his Makerere undergraduate dissertation that the 'Bagungu are extremely progressive' and 'hard working people' who were advanced 'in every walk of life imaginable', particularly 'in education and trade'.[1011] Within Bunyoro, Bugungu's reputation had been burnished by Bugungu Ltd; the renowned company hosted the Mukama, and it gained further fame at the district fair.[1012] Nationally, Bugungu's fame had also spread. One of the lowlands' sons, Joseph Robert Bikobbo, was winning awards for his performance in university degrees abroad on scholarships in Leeds and Zagreb.[1013] He was about to join a small but

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[1007] Roger J. Wheater, 'The need for Sympathetic Land Use in Areas adjoining NPs', 1967, RJWP.
[1008] 'New Game Reserve', *Uganda Argus*, 6 February 1968.
[1009] 'Omukama of Bunyoro opens maternity hospital', *Uganda Argus*, 8 November 1966.
[1010] 'Gone – Uganda's era of servitude', *Uganda Argus*, 19 April 1968.
[1011] Edward Kakongoro, 'Kibiro Salt', unpublished BA dissertation (Makerere College, University of East Africa, 1968), p. 25.
[1012] 'Omukama on tour', *Uganda Argus*, 30 August 1967; 'Forest top show stands', *Uganda Argus*, 4 August 1968.
[1013] 'Letter to the editor', *Newsweek*, 12 February 1968.

growing group from Bugungu who had returned from education abroad to coveted jobs in central government ministries and inter-territorial agencies. Wanzala for his part had secured a seat on the board of the NTC and was talked about by members of the National Assembly as one of 'big people' with 'big monies'.[1014] *The People* newspaper interviewed him for a profile piece in 1968; he was even approvingly identified as 'a genuine Ugandan capitalist' – a 'fascinating example of what can be done', in a feature article on African managers in London's *Management Today*.[1015]

Downturn, disorder, and division, 1968-1970

But Bugungu's incorporation and status was a precarious business. The lowlands' political significance greatly diminished after about 1967. The district's factions' shared, overriding political focus evaporated, and a new faction arrived, after the Lost Counties of Bugangaizi and Buyaga in late 1964 voted to be rejoin Bunyoro instead of remaining in Buganda. The fallout had been delayed by the local government's decision to hold Council elections just before the referendum. But in 1968 twenty new Gangaizi members from these largely Catholic – albeit largely UPC-supporting – districts entered Bunyoro's District Council. Positions and resources over which these factions could compete were increasingly limited. After violently crushing the Buganda Kingdom in 1966, Obote's UPC government centralised power, emasculating the local governments, relegated semi-federal Bunyoro to mere district status under the 1967 Constitution. This move reduced the number of ministries from four to two and prevented the Secretary General –

[1014] *Office Report of the Proceedings of the National Assembly: Second Session—First Meeting, Monday 12th June, 1967* (Entebbe, 1967), p. 37.
[1015] Rex Winsbury, 'New managers for Africa', *Management Today* (February 1969), pp. 92-97, 140-141 (140).

as the Katikiro was renamed – from uniting different political factions behind him by awarding a ministry to each. Bigirwa was one of those who lost a ministry. The abolition of the Nyoro traditional monarchy served to lower the civilisational status of plateau, it also served to undermine the alliance that had developed between the latter and Bugungu.[1016]

Connections were also put under strain by Uganda's troubled economy. Bugungu experienced severe downturns starting from 1967, as trade slowed when the price of consumer goods shot up from the day of the national budget, and there were substantial falls in the prices of cash crops. Officials reported that 'no fish was caught for sale', and fishermen had started to leave for other fishing villages. The average monthly sales for both retailers and wholesalers considerably went down, with traders selling on credit more than ever, owing to its customers' lack of cash.[1017] 'There is no money these days', one government official was told.[1018]

Bugungu Ltd itself had long strained under its own internal and fundamental tensions. Perhaps for good reason, of the dozens of other firms who were granted sub-distributorships by the NTC, only a small minority were private limited companies, and those, without exception, were owned by individuals and families – like J.W.B. Kasigwa & Sons in Masindi, Bwambale & Co. in Tooro, and Sabiti Lubega Ltd in Masaka – not collections of the wealthiest members of an ethnic communities.[1019] Bugungu Ltd had expanded extremely quickly. Problems over

[1016] Roger J. Southall, *Parties and politics in Bunyoro* (Kampala, 1972), pp. 20-25.
[1017] Kamanyi (Assistant Trade Development Officer Bunyoro), 'Annual Report 17 January 1967, MDA.
[1018] Kamanyi (Assistant Trade Development Officer Bunyoro), 'Annual Report 17 January 1967, MDA.
[1019] For a full list, see F. Higiro-Semajege, *The role of National Trading Corporations in stimulating African entrepreneurship* (Kampala, 1968).

personnel and working capital meant they increasingly struggled to compete with South Asian wholesalers.[1020] But even more serious was the considerable mutual distrust that existed between the firm's educated people – referred to pejoratively as *bajungu bairaguru*, 'black Europeans' – and those with little or no formal education. Many of the members believed giving responsibility to the educated was 'like throwing a rat to a cat', Wanzala told *The People*. Much to the chagrin of some of the older, and less lettered members, Wanzala insisted on speaking English in meetings. The older boat-owners who had founded the company resented and resisted attempts of Wanzala and his educated allies to reinvest their money in fixed assets, and to extend the distribution of fish caught by Bugungu fishermen. Soon one of the older fishermen-transporters in the company began to run a competing business, and broke away to form his own company, Bijampora Ltd, and somehow managed to take Bugungu Ltd's transport licence with him. Legal wrangles ensued. Around the turn of 1969, a beleaguered Wanzala resigned and went alone. With the support of his fans at the UN ILO, he obtained capital for his own private business, focusing on Butiaba and Masindi.[1021]

Even during its period of success, Bugungu Ltd had only brought into sharper relief the ethno-civilisational fault lines in lowland society. At the pinnacle of the local economic structure were extremely wealthy men who owned modern motor-powered boats (bought with government subsidies) and put out about 15 nets daily, which earned them about 2,500/- per month. Porters working for boat-owners were paid a paltry monthly wage of about 60/- plus food and lodging.[1022]

[1020] 'Bunyoro Kingdom Annual Report – 1966', 1967, MDA.
[1021] Ssali Ssekitoleko, 'Entrust money to an educated person - that's like throwing a rat to a cat', *The People*, 21 October 1968; Int. Gungu 15c; Bahoire, 'Ntandikwa'.

[1022] Aerni, 'Man and wildlife', p. 28.

Inequality had been exacerbated by UNP's confiscation and destruction of hundreds of canoes as anti-poaching measure. It had forced 'quite a number' of 'Bagungu fishermen' into the same economic position as the vast majority of the Alur. Some of them relied on cultivating cotton, but it had fallen heavily in price.[1023] Others went fishing for other men, being paid a shilling a day, or one shilling for each ten shillings' worth of fish sold; this was ten times less than the man with a dugout canoe and three nets could obtain.[1024] As the aims of the 'Banyoro Bagungu Ladies Committee' suggested, strains relating to high bridewealth expectations only grew worse in the mid-1960s. Even men who made a comfortable living from fishing believed it necessary to keep a woman busy to prevent sexual adventures on her part, and, simply 'because we paid brideprice', as one man explained it.[1025] At the same time, husbands demanded a certain portion of any private incomes was generated by married women by making alcohol, cultivating cotton, or rearing small stock.[1026]

At this time, a rather unhealthy assessment of lowland society from a Western perspective was offered by American anthropologist called Mary-Jean Aerni. Aerni spent a few weeks visiting Wanseko in 1968, working under the auspices of UNP on a report on the inhabitants' attitudes towards the park, supported by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Inexperienced in Africa, and working closely with UNP's wardens, Aerni indulged in the same damning discourses that colonial officials had deployed in relation to Bugungu since the 1940s. She condemned 'the

[1023] 'Bunyoro unions badly hit by cotton prices', *Uganda Argus*, 5 March 1968.
[1024] Aerni, 'Man and wildlife' pp. 28-33.
[1025] Aerni, 'Man and wildlife', p. 41.
[1026] E. Kasangaki, 'Social and economic factors affecting nutrition in Bugungu area, Bunyoro district', BSc dissertation (Department of Agriculture, Makerere University, Kampala, 1972), p. 21.

Bagungu', as a 'disorganised community' who lacked the 'education or disciplined effort' to take advantage of 'the proceeds' of fishing. The profits had 'disappeared' 'without ameliorating the conditions of the women, adding perceptibly to the enlightenment of men, or the better care and homelife of the children'. Though admiring the Alur as the 'hardest workers', Aerni asserted that Wanseko provided 'ample illustration of the human desire for indulgence during a time of unexpected and unearned prosperity'.[1027]

In her relentlessly bleak account of Wanseko, Aerni made one recommendation that prefigured one that was to be made in a far more notorious ethnographic text from this period.[1028] Unbeknownst to the people of Bugungu, in one provocative recommendation that did not make it into her final report, she suggested that residents of Bugungu be relocated above the escarpment to the south, away from the park and the lakeshore to make way for reclamation by UNP. In a rather absurd reversal of the usual roles, the British chief warden – a former colonial policeman – maintains that he dissuaded her from voicing this proposal, pointing to the political ramifications of governmental abduction.[1029]

Officials increasingly cast Bugungu as a place of rife criminality. In late 1968, '38 fishermen were rounded up' by the administration in one operation targeting tax defaulters, 'fishing net robbers', and other criminals on the islands known as 'Kampala', 'Lubiri', 'Karamoja', 'Entebbe', and 'Luzira'.[1030] But the government

[1027] Aerni, 'Man and wildlife', pp. 51-53.
[1028] Colin M. Turnbull, *The mountain people* (New York, 1972).
[1029] Roger J. Wheater, 'Memoir', unpublished manuscript, c. 2009, RWP. Aerni's fieldnotes from Uganda at UC Berkeley are embargoed (until June 2024).
[1030] 'District Commissioner's Monthly Report [February 1967', 9 March 1968, HDA; A.L. Ojara (Ag. DC Bunyoro) to DCs West Nile and Acholi, 20 September 1968, HDA, C/TCF/Vol II.

took a particularly authoritarian approach to outsiders. Obote warned Bugungu of the dangers posed by immigrants 'who wanted to bring trouble to Uganda'.[1031] District officials increasingly discussed the Congo Alur as a 'quite uncontrollable' people. Administrators identified the 'undesirable elements' fundraising for Congolese Lumumbist rebel movements as a 'very big security risk'. Officials were concerned that it was 'difficult to differentiate' between Ugandan and Congolese Alur.[1032] A crackdown on unlicensed fish buyers from the Congo, preceded an announcement that Obote's regime had announced that it intended to stop issuing licences to non-Ugandan fishermen and fishmongers. [1033] The 1969 Trade Licensing Act allowed the government to prohibit non-citizens from trading in specified areas and in specified items.[1034]

While the early part of the decade had seen Bugungu open out in order to prove its ethno-civilisational credentials, the end of the decade showed internal strains within the community manifesting in 'latent tension' between the community and those it considered to be outsiders.[1035] A touring ADC noted that '[m]any shop keepers were very grateful to the Government of Uganda for having introduced the Trade Licensing Act'. 'These people of Wanseko do not want to see "Asians" in shops'.[1036] A familiar, older 'parochialism' in relation to the plateau was also increasingly on show. Condemning their 'parochialism', the ADC Bunyoro noted

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[1031] 'Plea to Bunyoro', *Uganda Argus*, 18 April 1968.
[1032] A.L. Ojara (Ag. DC Bunyoro) to PS Public Service Department, 27 November 1968, HDA, C/TCF/Vol II.
[1033] 'Fish buyer fined', *Uganda Argus*, 9 June 1969, 'No licences for non-Uganda fishermen', *The People*, 1 October 1970.
[1034] R.L. Settumba (ADC Bunyoro), 'Touring report for Bujenje County', 21 July 1970, HDA, C/TCF.
[1035] Aerni, 'Progress report on Research on Game Conservation in Uganda', RAC, RBF/RG3.1/Grants/Box 1007/Folder 6127.
[1036] R.L. Settumba (ADC Bunyoro), 'Touring report for Bujenje County', 21 July 1970, HDA, C/TCF.

that the people in Bugungu 'argue that Geography cut them off from the rest of the District and as such they should be treated a bit differently'. 'They even argue that their area (Bugungu) has no Secondary School whereas Bunyoro (as if they are not in Bunyoro) has got all the three Schools'.[1037]

Conclusion

In the first decade of independence, Bugungu attempted to cast off colonial discourses and practices of degradation. The meteoric rise of Bugungu Ltd marked the pinnacle of this long-running project of reinvention and repudiation. But Bugungu was heavily freighted with meanings accreted over a long history of its relationship with the escarpment and outside authorities. Intra-communal tensions over the nature of ethno-civilisationalism were brought into sharp relief in the fall of what reformer-entrepreneurs had hoped would function as a corporate vehicle of reputational and moral improvement. Certain images, deeply internalised and inscribed through classificatory violence, proved difficult to fully shed, as old ideas of inferiority transmuted into new putative barbarisms. The nervous, authoritarian post-colonial state also found it difficult to relinquish the practices and discourses that had been so central to colonial statecraft at the margins. By the late 1960s it legitimised the xenophobic identification of new targets of classificatory violence outside the Ugandan citizenry.

[1037] R.L. Settumba (ADC Bunyoro) to DC Bunyoro, 'Touring report for Bujenje County', 21 July 1970, HDA, C/TCF.

CHAPTER EIGHT: *Colonial spectres: decline and crisis, c.1971 to c.1991*

Political, social and economic horizons had temporarily widened in the 1960s for a small but growing section of the lowland Gungu community, who actively contested and shaped putative inter-ethnic hierarchies of civilisationalism in Bunyoro. But this always-precarious project of reinvention was thrown into fundamental doubt as the disconnection and degradation of the 1970s eroded its material underpinnings. Institutional, infrastructural, economic and regulatory collapse produced a bewildering period political openings, closures and realignments and inculcated a profound localism. Evoking the 1940s and 1950s, this chapter traces the shocking re-emergence of the classificatory violence of collectivising punishment as internalised by bereft local actors reacting, like colonial officials before them, to perceived political insubordination. Such violence reinscribed difference and hierarchies of ethno-civilisationalism, only now tied explicitly to a politics of indigeneity, as shaped by donor-induced state retreat, economic liberalisation, and the return of electoral politics.

Localisation and destabilisation, 1971-1974

The two or three months immediately following Idi Amin's January 1971 military coup in certain respects witnessed the end of politics as it had been known in independent Uganda. Through a series of decrees, the military regime banned political parties, postponed elections for up to five years, and dissolved parliament, district, municipal and town councils, along with the offices of Mayor, and Deputy Mayor, and the District Council's Secretary-General and Assistant

Secretary-General. Amin appointed a cabinet of ministers at the centre consisting mainly of career civil servants and he treated them as such. All legislative, executive and military powers were vested in General Amin as head of government and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Amin ruled by decree.[1038]

In the largely pro-UPC Bunyoro, which had historically contributed few men to the armed forces, the reception of the coup had been decidedly 'lukewarm', as one Nyoro petitioner admitted.[1039] UPC politicians found themselves stifled or worse. Newly re-empowered DCs were tasked with upholding strict residence and travel restrictions on all former members of parliament, mayors, district councillors, and other public figures.[1040] Certain Bunyoro District UPC notables suffered the brutality of Amin's state security apparatus. To avoid the same fate, the former District Council Speaker Kassim Rubenda from Bugungu fled to Zaire – as Congo was renamed by President Mobutu in 1971.[1041]

Much of the literature concerning 1970s' Uganda emphasises that ethnic hostilities rose to unprecedented levels. But scholars have offered little sense of how these rivalries manifested themselves beyond the military's violently diminishing circles of inclusion.[1042][1043] The scholarship gives the impression that the struggles of the 1970s are the struggles of *individuals*, such as local government bureaucrats, urban

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[1038] Michael Twaddle, 'The Amin Coup', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* 10, no. 2 (1972), pp. 99-112.
[1039] Jan Jelmert Jørgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History* (London, 1981), p. 303; Int. Gungu 14c; Joseph I. Kalisa, Saulo Makenzi, George Kaija and Sezi Kacope to President Idi Amin, 22 August 1971, HDA.
[1040] 'Bunyoro warning', *Uganda Argus*, 12 May 1971.
[1041] Ints. Gungu 14c & 22a.
[1042] Holger Bernt Hansen, 'Uganda in the 1970s: A Decade of Paradoxes and Ambiguities', *JEAS* 7, no. 1 (2003), 83-103.
[1043] Jørgensen, *Uganda*, pp. 303-306.

women, or Ugandan Asians.[1044] This politics of survival apparently 'diverted and sidetracked' 'ethnic ambitions'.[1045] It is as if the energetic ethnic entrepreneurialism of previous decades was for a time frozen, 'unresolved'. Amin's Uganda was in some ways a 'command economy'.[1046] But ethnically-framed demands did not stop. Ugandan citizens claiming to speak for certain, often very localised constituencies sought to capitalise on the political rupture. Lacking in formal, political representatives, Ugandan citizens relied even more heavily on the culture of petitioning than they had before Amin, and the provincial archives abound with evidence of this epistolary culture. Amin's ostentatious efforts to solicit opinions from 'elders' and other special interest groups encouraged subterranean supporters of the DP, like the Catholic businessman Daniel Wanzala who had pioneered Bugungu Ltd, to emerge from the political wilderness.[1047]

In the lowlands, a very localist mode of political claim-making was animated by growing intra- and inter-ethnic competition for lacustrine and terrestrial resources. Gungu petitioners made demands for alterations to the game reserve and national parks in order to open up both land for animal husbandry and the Victoria Nile for fishing.[1048] Though cast in the language of nationality and citizenship – of 'foreigners' and 'Zaireans' – central to petitioners' concerns was

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[1044] Derek R. Peterson and Edgar C. Taylor, 'Rethinking the state in Idi Amin's Uganda: the politics of exhortation', *JEAS* 7, no. 1 (2013), pp. 58-82 (pp. 61-62); Alicia C. Decker, *In Idi Amin's Shadow: Women, Gender, and Militarism in Uganda* (Athens, OH, 2014).
[1045] Aidan W. Southall, 'Partitioned Alur', in A. I. Asiwaju (ed.), *Partitioned Africans* (New York, 1985), pp. 87- 103 (p. 98).
[1046] Peterson & Taylor, 'Rethinking'.
[1047] Joseph I. Kalisa, Saulo Makenzi, George Kaija and Sezi Kacope to President Idi Amin, 22 August 1971, HDA.
[1048] Uganda, *Farmers' Forum Report* (Entebbe, 1971), pp. 97-98, 104.

the continuing intrusion of Alur fishermen.[1049] Embittered UPC men from in and around the protestant node of Kisansya near Buliisa Town viewed the Ndandamire-Wanseko's largely Catholic Alur presence – and the Catholic DP Gungu who associated with them and very often married their women –with particular apprehension.[1050]

Gungu claims represented a nervous reaction to the changing ways the Alur community saw the lowlands and themselves. In the 1970s, Alur had continued to gravitate towards the fisheries and supposedly 'free land' in Buliisa Sub-County leading to a shift in the lowlands' demographic makeup. In the face of growing Gungu hostility, the Alur increasingly imagined themselves a collective. Transcending divisions between and within the Alur of Zaire and those of Uganda was made easier by the fact that in Buliisa these people were 'all mixed up'.[1051] The idea of the lowlands as a place of temporary political and economic sanctuary began to be supplanted. When Alur had settled in a certain village in Ngwedo Parish near the park boundary in the 1960s they had named this open land 'Avogira', meaning 'I have taken temporary refuge', in their language.[1052] But many did return to their areas of birth, cognisant of intensifying hunger in the highlands on both sides of the West Nile-Zaire border. Through their toponymic acts, these settlers began to conceive of 'Alur areas', located along particular stretches of the shoreline, and in the eastern hinterland of the district. [1053] Some Alur took the view – one seemingly shared by some Nyoro highlanders – that northern Bunyoro had

[1049] Yusufu Musasi (Wanseko Fishing Ground) to DC Bunyoro (D. Kabateraine) 17 January 1972, HDA; PS/Commissioner for Ministry of Animal Industry, Game and Fisheries (C.W.H. Wamalwa) to D.M. Wanzala, 30 March 1972, HDA.
[1050] Gungu 1a.
[1051] Int. Alur 16 & 1.
[1052] Int. Alur 13.
[1053] Int. Alur 7 & 6.

become – or was always – 'an extension of Alurland', as anthropologist Aidan Southall maintained.[1054]

There were multiple elements to these claims to belonging. Some Zairean Alur claimed that they now held 'citizenship' as they had stayed in Uganda for a long time.[1055] Others drew on narratives of historical interaction to stake autochthonous claims on the lowland landscape, or specific parts of it. Some cultivators in the eastern lowlands, claimed that they had made this area their own through sweat and courage as pioneers. Alur informants maintained that owing to the presence of dangerous animals, 'no one would even dare to come around here' until the Alur pioneers arrived in the 1950s, and 'cleared it of bushes'.[1056] Some Alur claims took in the whole of the lowlands, undercutting Gungu autochthonous narratives by referring to a deeper past. Alur had long asserted through oral traditions of Lwo migration centuries earlier that they had been 'the first' to stay in northern Bunyoro and to worship spirits at Mount Gisi just above the escarpment to the south-east of the lowlands.[1057] But other claims were connected to specific localities outside the park that some Alur had inhabited on the eve of the sleeping sickness displacements of 1909. Though rendered faint by intervening spatial and temporal disconnection, a special significance was accorded to a place called Kakora, located in the interior of the sub-county, between Ngwedo and Bugana. Some informants recounted their grandparents' stories of being born in Kakora.[1058] They pointed to physical evidence at this place – acacia trees and

[1054] Aidan W. Southall, 'History and the discourse of underdevelopment among the Alur of Uganda', in W. James (ed.), *The Pursuit of Certainty: religious and cultural formulations* (London, 1995), pp. 45-57 (p. 50).
[1055] Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, March 1975, MDA, 567 or 660.
[1056] Ints. Alur 18, 8, 7, 1.
[1057] Southall, 'History', p. 50.
[1058] Int. Alur 16.

pieces of pots unearthed while digging – dating back to 'before the whites came'.[1059]

And there was little chance that Amin's regime would undermine the Alur position. Although the Alur in the lowlands had shown enthusiasm for Obote, they were from Uganda's north-western borderlands, like Amin.[1060] They were also largely Catholic – the denomination more typically associated with the DP than the UPC. The Alur enjoyed unprecedented connection to power under the military government. Though several Alur appointed to high office by Amin were purged as the Kakwa and Nubi closed ranks, the Alur remained prominent at the 'outer core' of the regime, as historian Holger Hansen has put it. They were numerous in the lower ranks of military, in part because of Amin's recruitment of one-time Mulelist/Lumumbist rebels from Zaire.[1061] More generally, and in keeping with his ostentatiously anti-imperialist stance, Amin tended to extend a warm welcome to peoples purporting to have been pro-Lumumba.[1062]

The moves for internal political legitimation that Amin made specifically in Bunyoro were directed largely at the plateau, and mostly symbolic in nature. He initiated a large-scale sugar project near Masindi, and an attempt to ingratiate himself with royalist Nyoro ethnic patriots included symbolic gestures such as the renaming of Murchison Falls in honour of the elderly ex-Mukama Tito Winyi's late father, the late-nineteenth-century Nyoro potentate Kabalega. But not one

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[1059] Int. Alur 14, 5, 1.
[1060] Aidan Southall, 'Isolation and underdevelopment: Periphery and centre', in Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael Twaddle (eds.), *Developing Uganda* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 254-260 (256).
[1061] Holger Bernt Hansen, *Ethnicity and military rule in Uganda* (Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1977), pp. 113-114.
[1062] 'The refugees jump for joy', *Uganda Argus*, 8 June 1972; 'General Amin goes hunting', *Uganda Argus*, 29 August 1972.

person from Bunyoro served as a cabinet minister under Amin. Extreme disconnection – for better and for worse – characterised Bunyoro's experience of Amin's rule.[1063] The symbolic and developmental goods that Amin delivered to Bunyoro were distant from and irrelevant to many Gungu lowlanders.[1064]

Measures that materially benefited Bugungu were short-lived and limited. Any hopes raised by the few patron-client linkages Amin forged with the lowlands through appointments in the civilian bureaucracy proved to be misplaced. The high politics of Kampala came with high risk for local ethnic patrons. Before the coup, Bugungu's Bikobbo had moved from a position in the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism to work in the murky world of the Office of the President. When the coup occurred, he had been away for postgraduate study at the US' Vanderbilt University, but returned to work for Amin. However, Bikobbo's connections to both Obote and American academia made him particularly vulnerable amid the paranoid spiral of violence that came to characterise Amin's regime. Bikobbo fled to Nairobi in late 1973. He seems to have returned later to Uganda only to meet his end in helicopter 'crash', near Mbale in April 1976, according to a report in the *Voice of Uganda* – the mouthpiece of the military government.[1065]

Similarly, Amin's headline economic policy won him little popularity in the lowlands. Under pressure from African traders, in late August 1972 Amin announced his infamous 'Economic War', under which non-citizen Asians were to

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[1063] Captured poignantly in Goretti Kyomuhendo, *Waiting* (New York, 2007). See also, J.B. Horrocks, 'Tour Report', 30 March 1973, UKNA, FCO 31/1584.
[1064] For a lowland act of *lèse-majesté*, see Yosamu Kaijakubi (Chairman of Bugungu Farmers) to DC Bunyoro, 3 May 1971, HDA, VET.1/Vol.4.
[1065] Int. Gungu 26a; Bikobbo to Dragnic, 4 July 1972, HIA, 77109, 22/30; and Bikobbo to Dragnich, n.d), HIA, 77109, 22/30.

be expelled.[1066] Though roundly praised by the African population as it reduced competition, few traders in the lowlands benefited directly.[1067] There was little in the way of foreign assets in Buliisa Sub-County as South Asian businessmen had already all but disappeared from Buliisa Town. The Economic War offered limited, short-lived sources of patronage. Gungu traders quickly grew aggrieved at the lack of supplies and requirements to sell their goods at prices dictated by the State Trading Corporation.[1068]

Rather than bolstering Gungu control of the lowlands, the policies of the Amin regime began to erode it – both directly and indirectly. In his efforts to 'establish love' – his regime provided means by which to vent pent-up political energies.[1069] Resurrecting one of Obote's plans, the military government in March 1973 held 'elections' for chiefs from the village to the county level. In certain parts of Uganda, the elections turned out to be more 'consultations'. In some areas, the chiefs who were elected were soon replaced en masse by the military regime. [1070] But this seems to have been less the case in the lowlands – and in Bunyoro in general – than it was elsewhere. As Alur made up a growing percentage of the lowland population, they were able to obtain a few positions slightly higher up in the sub-county's chiefly hierarchy – at the level of parish and sub-parish chiefs. [1071] This was the period when 'Alur also started leading', as one informant recalled.[1072]

[1066] Masindi Traders to Minister of Commerce & Industry, 3 January 1972,_MDA, TRD.8
[1067] 'Go upcountry and see real success', *Voice of Uganda*, 29 December 1972.
[1068] 'Abasohi nibaija kutunga obukonyezi', *Mwebembezi*, 20 April 1973.
[1069] 'Selection of chiefs completed', *Voice of Uganda*, 12 April 1973.
[1070] For a brief but insightful account from southern Uganda, see Per Tidemand, 'The Resistance Council in Uganda: A Study of Rural Politics and Popular Democracy in Afrika', Ph.D (Roskilde University, 1994), pp. 53-54.
[1071] Int. Alur 13.
[1072] Int. Alur 5.

Emboldened by their purchase on political authority, representatives of the Alur community also began demanding social expenditure in the areas they dominated.[1073]

Amin also altered the Lake Albert fishing regulations that had long structured local ethnic hierarchies after talks with his Zairean counterpart Mobutu in July 1973. The outcome of these talks that grabbed most headlines was the lake's renaming as 'Lake Mobutu Sese Seko'. But this symbolism only compounded ideas encouraged by more tangible measures introduced simultaneously to 'strengthen ties'. Amin lessened restrictions that had attempted to stop Zaireans from fishing in Uganda's waters.[1074] At the canoe regatta held as part of the public renaming ceremony, 'Uganda fishermen displayed their undisputed mastery', but Gungu domination over the waters near the lowland shoreline was more difficult to maintain owing to an immediate 'influx' of Zairean fishermen into 'the much coveted and more productive' Ugandan waters.[1075]

Redefining Bugungu, 1974-1979

The wider economic and political trends within Amin's Uganda intensified localism. The 'economic war' wrought lasting damage; rampant inflation and severe shortages were only exacerbated from 1973 as a result of the international oil crisis. The parallel cash economy, referred to as *magendo*, which had long been a feature in the lowlands, increasingly replaced the officially organised economy.

[1073] Int. Alur 3; 'Ngwedo Memorandum' to The Provincial Governor Western Province, 20 April 1978, MDA, BOX 574.
[1074] 'Authenticity triumphs over colonialism', *Voice of Uganda*, 17 July 1973.
[1075] Fisheries Department Annual Report for 1973, SHLA; Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, March 1975, MDA, 567 or 660.

In the lowlands, certain people were 'running Magendo on a great scale'.[1076] The *magendo* economy had a long history in the lowlands. The smuggling of salted fish across the lake had been pervasive for several decades.[1077] But in the 1970s a variety of other goods increasingly found their way to Zaire along with the fish. There were huge returns to be made on smuggling petrol, paraffin and, especially in the middle of the decade, coffee brought in from the plateau. Other commodities such as soap and sugar, which were hard to come by in Uganda, were smuggled in from Zaire.[1078] Away from the lake, rampant poaching occurred in the national park and game reserve.[1079] While the Alur near the park boundary were poaching meat, largely for subsistence, the chief park warden noted, the 'Wagungus' (*sic*) were 'mainly interested in crocodile skins and ivories' (*sic*).[1080]

The rise of the *magendo* economy had multiple implications. For one, the plateau – once the source and target of elite aspirations – faded into irrelevance. But as well as re-orienting the lowland gaze, the practices and proceeds of the *magendo* economy engendered a profound sense of social disorder and distrust. Under-resourced government employees lacked the means to counter the *magendo* economy.[1081] But they also lacked the will. Amin's over-extended state let inflation erode real value of officials' wages, with predictable consequences for their

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[1076] 'A warning against smuggling', *Voice of Uganda*, 28 June 1975; Minutes Buliisa County Team, 4 June 1979, MDA, TRD.2.
[1077] Int. Gungu 15c; Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, September 1977, HDA, ADM.14/3.
[1078] Ints. Gungu 16a, 14c, & 22a; Int. Alur 5.
[1079] Ali Fadhul warns game poachers', *Voice of Uganda*, 6 December 1974.
[1080] UNP Director, First Quarterly Report of 1973, QENPA; Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, October 1977, HDA, no box/ADM.14/3.
[1081] 'The Minutes of the Bugungu Sub-District Team and Planning Committee Meeting held on 13th June 1977', HDA, ADM.5/A/1; ADC Bugungu Sub-District to R. Rugadya, 13 April 1978, MDA.

diligence and integrity.[1082] Park rangers, if they were not collaborating in poaching operations, 'would just shoot you', one informant explained.[1083]

A culture of cheating and greed flourished, producing a sense of moral crisis in the lowlands. The 'chief *magendoists*' were certain traders and fishermen from the Gungu community who grew 'wild with money', noted one chief, who was himself a 'prominent trader'.[1084] 'Although money is hated by nobody', he conceded, *magendo* was a 'threatening disease' that was 'spoiling the good name of Bugungu'. Rival Gungu trading and transportation companies scrapped it out over transport and smuggling routes,[1085] 'always bribing their way in and out', as one informant put it.[1086] The wealthy accessed commodities and equipment 'from dubious sources' 'usually at 5-8 times the normal prices', fisheries officers reported.[1087] Those who had the means plundered the lake using illegal nets; it was as if there were 'no rules', regretted one informant.[1088] The lucrative *magendo* trade – and a general anti-intellectualism that pervaded the country under Amin – reduced the interest people took in education.[1089] 'It seems that these people do not care about books if they do they care but a little', remarked one seller of Christian literature.[1090] Chiefs reported that some Gungu men ignored their cotton

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[1082] ADC Bugungu Sub-District to DC North Bunyoro, 8 July 1975, MDA, 515/GAM.2; Minutes Buliisa County Team and planning Committee, 3 August 1979, MDA, TRD.2; Various to Minister of Provincial Administration, 1 April 1977, MDA, 510/MIS.12/1.
[1083] Int. Gungu 15a.
[1084] 'The Minutes of the Bugungu Sub-District Team and Planning Committee Meeting held on 6 September 1977', HDA, ADM.5/A/1.
[1085] Alex Mulimba & Bros to The Secretary, Transport Licensing Board, 2 May 1976 MDA, BOX 574.
[1086] Int. Gungu 22a.
[1087] Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, February 1978, KDA, 411/1.
[1088] Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, September 1978, MDA, 574.
[1089] Int. Gungu 23a.
[1090] 'Christian Literature distribution report in Toro and Bunyoro archdeaconries as from 23rd February to 16th March 1972', CUA, 8/4/112/1.

production directives on the grounds 'they were cattle keepers and fishermen only'.[1091]

Relations between these wealthier men and those unconnected to, or at the bottom of, the *magendo* networks were placed under significant strain. For poorer men fishing was a far more difficult business than ever before owing to cholera, dysentery, shortages and theft, all of which reached huge proportions in the 1970s.[1092] Those who relied on cotton for cash suffered as prices plummeted and the government failed to supply them with hoes and pay growers, while simultaneously attempting to compel them to grow the crop. [1093] Petitioners complained about certain families going 'almost half-naked' due to the cost of cloth, and 'consuming unsalted food', for want of that commodity.[1094] Some women were forced into brewing alcohol, and even, in one 'abnormal' case, actually fishing, provoking further moral outrage.[1095] Many 'unruly' young men descended into alcoholism, and turned to stealing fishing nets and even cotton.[1096]

While tensions increased over fishing rights, another front opened up inland as desperate Gungu families were increasingly looked to agriculture as a means of subsistence. This generated conflict as there was little suitable land available in Buliisa. The lowlands' growing population was hemmed in at its north, east and south by the park and game reserve – a situation they protested against.[1097] The

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[1091] 'The Minutes of the Bugungu Sub-District Team and Planning Committee Meeting held on 13th June 1977', HDA, ADM.5/A/1.
[1092] Fisheries Department Annual Report for 1973, SHLA.
[1093] Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, June 1978, MDA, ADM.14.
[1094] Memorandum from Buliisa Sub-Parish to the Provincial Governor Western Province (Alex Owor) 12 April 1978, MDA, BOX 574.
[1095] Int. Alur 7; Int. Gungu 16a; Kasangaki, 'Social', p. 11.
[1096] Int. Gungu 15a; 'Minutes of the Bugungu Sub-District Team & Planning Committee held on 13th December 1977', HDA, ADM.5/2.
[1097] Kaheeru to ADC North Bunyoro, 7 April 1977, MDA, BOX 574.

shortage of land was also a product of the form that richer lowlanders' wealth had long taken. When they were not acquiring wives or 'merry-making', or reinvesting in illegal or legal trade, Gungu men with money bought cattle.[1098] Cultivators and administrators complained about the 'loitering' and 'gallivanting' cattle advancing eastwards.[1099]

When Gungu lowlanders turned their attentions to cultivable land, it brought them into conflict with the Alur. It was mainly in the eastern hinterland – the location of Buliisa's most fertile soils – that over previous two decades the Alur had settled, regardless of their citizenship. In return for fish and cash, they had provided the Gungu community with crops and labour. Gungu who sought agricultural land in Buliisa were increasingly forced to buy it from the Alur farmers.[1100] This situation proved rather galling for some. Gungu 'think that foreigners are not entitled to land', as one university student from Buliisa remarked in her 1973 undergraduate thesis.[1101] Gungu claims on this land were based on a rather tendentious reading of the history of wider settlement within lowlands prior to the sleeping sickness evictions. 'They said they are "returning to their land" [and that] we "should go back to our land" [in Zaire or West Nile]', one Alur informant bemoaned.[1102] The Alur were increasingly no longer seen as non-threatening presence.

[1098] Ints. Gungu 14c, 15c, 16a, 23a.
[1099] Assistant Agriculture Officer to Muluka Chief Kigwera Parish, 12 March 1978, MDA, BOX 574; K. TIbamwenda for Ag. County Chief Buliisa to Sub-County Chiefs, 19 June 1978, MDA, BOX 574; Kibambura cattle keepers to ADC Bugungu, 22 April 1979, MDA, BOX 574.
[1100] Ints. Gungu 3a & 22a.
[1101] Kasangaki, 'Social', p. 16.
[1102] Int. Alur 1.

Verbal confrontations rarely developed much further under Amin, however.[1103] Alur-Gungu social and political connections in certain parts of Buliisa – particularly around the Catholic hub at Ndandamire in the north-west – acted as a deterrent.[1104] People also thought it wise to keep a 'low profile' – to stay off the radar of the security organs of Amin's state.[1105] Violent clashes were not an option; the military regime 'would not to hear [of] those sort of things', one informant explained.[1106]

But 'Amin cooled it down' – at least temporarily – in other ways.[1107] Gungu ethnic patriots anxious to restore control over local political and economic resources had by 1974 started to pay closer attention to the opportunities presented by the military government's re-organisation of the country's administration, and its receptivity to further changes. Implemented in March 1974, the administrative overhaul involved the country's 20 districts increasing to 38, spread across ten provinces – a new bureaucratic tier – each under a provincial governor. This scheme amounted to 'the most extensive reorganisation of local government Uganda had ever seen', as historian Tony Low put it at the time.[1108] But the August 1972 announcement of moves towards this administrative revolution was largely overshadowed by the international outcry, and local jubilation that attended Amin's declaration of 'economic war', which had been made in the same speech.

[1103] Int. Alur 18 & 3.
[1104] Int. Gungu 11a; Int. Alur 18.
[1105] Int. Gungu 22a.
[1106] Int. Gungu 23a.
[1107] Int. Alur 18.
[1108] D.A. Low, 'Uganda Unhinged', *International Affairs* 49, no. 2 (1973), pp. 219-228 (p. 224).

The military regime rhetorically justified these administrative reforms in terms of 'convenience and efficiency'; Amin claimed that these had 'nothing whatsoever to do with political or tribal considerations'.[1109] But it was pre-eminently a matter of both. Amin claimed that the 'division of this country into administrative units by the colonists was haphazard' and 'not based on any rational criteria'.[1110] But Amin's rationale for this overhaul was in some ways identical to the ethnological approach of the early colonial state which had created and carved up Uganda.

To a certain extent, Amin's administrative revolution had the effect of popularising his regime among certain local ethnic patriots at Uganda's internal peripheries who felt marginalised under the extant administrative setup. Amin's ascent to power had stirred claims of a separatist nature which had been slowly evolving at Uganda's internal peripheries. Within a few months of the 1971 military coup Amin relented to creating two new districts by dividing Acholi and Karamoja, bringing the total to 20. These moves elicited a deluge of claims from political entrepreneurs from elsewhere in the country. Ugandan citizens pursued the creation of administrative positions because these offices represented sources of patronage – providing opportunities for rent-seeking, embezzlement, and the exercise of local political control.

The earliest advocates for change in Bunyoro were the people of the southern counties who felt marginalised in terms of the distribution of resources and had begun to envisage alternative political futures following the rupture of 1967. Many of those who began in 1971 to press demands for a separate 'South Bunyoro'

[1109] Idi Amin, 'Address to District Representatives on the Transfer of Economy into the Hands of Ugandans', in Uganda (ed.), *Speeches by His Excellency the President General Idi Amin Dada* (Entebbe, 1973), pp. 9-22 (p. 15).
[1110] 'Quick, proper service aim of move', *Uganda Argus*, 30 August 1972.

district were associated with the Mubende Banyoro Committee. In their petitions to Amin the Gangaizi attempted to propagate and leverage perceptions of Old Bunyoro as a hotbed of UPC loyalism, where chiefs oppressed the predominantly Catholic Gangaizi 'as a defeated tribe'.[1111] Writing before the announcement of plans for administrative overhaul, political scientist Roger Southall was right to express his doubt that 'the severe divisions in the body politic of Bunyoro' would be 'excised by military tutelage'.[1112]

Concerned about the proliferating claims and the costs of implementing and sustaining such changes, Amin had momentarily backtracked after months of stalling. In March 1972 he declared that demands for separate districts were futile as he planned to implement 'county-level administration' – without elaborating what this would mean in practice.[1113] In Amin's August 1972 speech, new districts were firmly back on the agenda. But the 33 districts – spread across nine provinces – slated at that time did not include a new district for southern Bunyoro.[1114]

But claims from the south of the district began to be echoed by Masindi's political elites, long aggrieved by the location of Bunyoro's district headquarters being in Hoima.[1115] In May 1973 new iteration of the list was produced, consisting of 39 new districts, including 'North Bunyoro' and 'South Bunyoro.[1116] While requests from

[1111] Henry F. Mirima and Ssali Sekitoleko to DC Bunyoro, 8 July 1971, HDA; B. Sserunkuma to President Idi Amin, 3 May 1971, SOAS, MS 380573, Box 1/6.
[1112] Roger J. Southall, *Parties and Politics in Bunyoro* (Kampala, 1972), p. 67.
[1113] '11 ministers assigned to study districts set-up', *The People*, 10 December 1971; 'County level administration for Uganda', *The People*, 11 March 1972.
[1114] 'Quick, proper service aim of move', *Uganda Argus*, 30 August 1972.
[1115] Int. Gungu 22a.
[1116] 'Reorganisation of administration', *The People*, 11 May 1973. Just two weeks before this announcement, the number of districts slated for creation increased to 36 (without identifying them). See 'Re-organisation of administration', *The People*, 27 April 1973.

the Lost Counties for a separate district solely for the Gangaizi had not been met; they would be forced to share a district with the Hoima faction's North Bugahya and South Bugahya counties. North Bunyoro was to consist of Bujenje – including Buliisa Sub-County – Kibanda and Buruli counties.

The chaotic character of the process of multi-layered balkanisation reflected the degree to which the process of reorganisation had become subject to, and fuelled further, instances of localist claim-making. But unit proliferation aided the government's political control in various ways beyond simply placating dissatisfied political entrepreneurs. Petitioners' demands for new administrative units also chimed with the anxieties of the government regime with regards to threats from within and without Uganda's borders.[1117] Though the September 1972 invasion of Uganda from Tanzania by about one thousand armed guerrillas loyal to Obote had ultimately failed, it had profoundly shaken the regime's confidence. As well as entailing the creation of new posts in which to insert those loyal or potentially troublesome to the regime, administrative disaggregation served to disarticulate frames for political action.[1118] It produced the illusion of decentralisation but, in reality, served to curb the power of certain groups, thereby centralising power within an overarching logic of *divide et impera*. The implications of the administrative rearrangements implemented in 22 March 1974 were complex for the people of the lowlands. There is little evidence of widespread political mobilisation in the lowlands concerning North Bunyoro District. But once implemented, its implications were multiple and complex. As Bikobbo

[1117] 'Karamoja now two districts', *Uganda Argus*, 9 April 1971; James Hennessy, 'Uganda: Annual Review for 1974', 24 February 1975, UKNA, FCO 31/1951.
[1118] Peter Redshaw, 'The civil service and police', 1972, UKNA, FCO 31/1324; Jørgensen, *Uganda*, pp. 309-309.

posited in his 1972 postgraduate thesis, though his people wanted 'always to be referred to as the Bagungu and not as the Banyoro', they needed 'to be identified as Banyoro' 'politically' because alone they were 'not numerically strong [enough] to exert effective pressure on authorities in Kampala'.[1119] Now, the political weight of the Gungu community was further attenuated by the division of Bunyoro as it separated the Gungu lowlanders from the what had been The Bagungu Location in Kitana-Kigorobya in South Bunyoro, thereby attenuating the disproportionate power they had previously enjoyed by straddling the Masindi-Hoima factionalism. The creation of North Bunyoro District provided little cause for celebration. Its headquarters were 120 kilometres away in Masindi, and it provided limited positions for Gungu elites.

It took another administrative device to stir the Gungu separatist imagination in the lowlands. In the wake of an attempted coup in late March, and facing diffuse disgruntlement on the peripheries (of the peripheries) regarding the new administration setup, the regime floated the idea of introducing the status of 'sub-district' in certain geographically peripheral areas.[1120][1121] Sub-districts entailed the establishment of secondary district headquarters headed by a resident Assistant District Commissioner in charge of a team of officers from the government departments (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, veterinary etc). 38 localities, including Buliisa Sub-County's eponymous town, were each chosen to host a sub-district. North Bunyoro's secondary node was established in October 1974. It was named 'Bugungu Sub-District'. This ethno-toponymic term for the lowlands had

[1119] J.J. Robert Bikobbo-Mugayo, 'Problems of African political development: tribalism, leadership, military interventions and unity', unpublished MA dissertation (Vanderbilt University, 1972), p. 39-41.
[1120] Int. Gungu 14c.
[1121] 'Sub-Dis. empyaka eya Bugungu etandikireho', *Mwebembezi*, 25 October 1974.

continued to be much used in unofficial parlance; but it had not been used to refer to an official entity since the colonial period.[1122] The introduction of Bugungu Sub-District validated and encouraged the notion that the lowlands were deserving of special administrative treatment. Gungu ethnic patriots' hopes for the sub-district were to prove misplaced, however. Its patronage posts were by no means limited to Gungu. Some of the departmental staff posted to work as officers in the sub-district team were Gungu, but not the office of ADC. Amin's fretful state inserted people loyal or beholden to his regime in the most powerful local position in the lowlands irrespective of their origins. Much to the chagrin of many Gungu, even an Alur highlander served in the position for about two years in the mid-to-late 1970s.[1123]

As had been the case during the planning and establishment of full district, the introduction of the sub-districts provoked fresh claims. Petitioners were encouraged to believe that further boundary changes were within reach,[1124] and even in the last year of Amin's rule the regime was soliciting requests through a system of regulated, even-more-localised claim-making. Ahead of county tours by the provincial governor, each parish was required to 'prepare a memorandum which will cover the successes of the Military Government in their parish, failures, problems and a comprehensive report on the developmental projects'.[1125] The regime was ill-disposed towards the language of 'tribe' and exclusive political entitlements; collective claims were accordingly framed by local petitioners as

[1122] Idi Amin, *The shaping of modern Uganda and administrative divisions: documents, 1900-76* (Entebbe, 1976).
[1123] Ints. Gungu 23a & 14c.
[1124] 'Re-organisation of administration', *The People*, 27 April 1973.
[1125] Minutes of the North Bunyoro District Team and Planning Committee, 9 March 1978, MDA, BOX 574.

being 'in line with the Government policy of taking services nearer to the people',[1126] as extant units were 'too large' for one official 'to administer effectively'. [1127]

Uganda would have to wait until January 1979 for Amin to allow another couple of districts to be created; but political entrepreneurs seeking more modest adjustments found a still receptive audience.[1128] While demands for construction or rehabilitation of boreholes or classrooms, for example, fell on deaf ears, the regime was amenable to local calls for upgraded administrative status as the costs of new posts did not entail high capital investment in terms of infrastructure. Communities had come to expect that in return for new administrative units, they would have to collectively construct new headquarters on a 'self-help' basis.[1129]

It appears that over the couple of years following the introduction of Bugungu Sub-District, lowland political entrepreneurs began to petition for a separate county – carving out of Bujenje, a new smaller county containing the two sub-counties of Buliisa and Biiso. Straddling the escarpment, Biiso was home to a cosmopolitan – but predominantly Alur – population centred on the eponymous sub-county headquarters overlooking the lowlands, in addition to Butiaba and Bugoigo. The latter fishing centres had drawn increasing numbers of fishers– including many Gungu men – over the 1970s.[1130] The section above the escarpment increasing became an alternative focus of land acquisition by Gungu families in

[1126] 'Memorandum from Kigwera Parish', 20 April 1978, MDA, BOX 574.
[1127] 'Memorandum from Buliisa Sub-Parish to the Provincial Governor Western Province', 12 April 1978, MDA, BOX 574.
[1128] 'Gombolola unit opens', *Uganda Argus*, 9 June 1972.
[1129] 'Sub-Dis. empyaka eya Bugungu etandikireho', *Mwebembezi*, 25 October 1974.
[1130] Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, July 1977, HDA, ADM.14/3; Monthly Provincial Fisheries Report, September 1978, MDA, BOX 574.

search of food security. The county campaign proved successful. In April 1977, the provincial administration assented to the creation of what would now be known as Buliisa County. The Gungu preference for 'Bugungu' was overruled;[1131] but a Gungu man, a sub-county chief above the escarpment called Herizoni Bujunde Kintu, was appointed as county chief in Buliisa.

Once achieved, this change, in turn, immediately encouraged further claims, some more ambitious than others. Gungu ethnic patriots began to petition for the addition of the upland Kigorobya Sub-County which, though contiguous to Biiso, remained in South Bunyoro. This represented a project of both ethnic reconsolidation, and ethno-territorial aggrandisement, as Kigorobya had been inhabited by an outcrop of the Gungu population since the sleeping sickness epidemic of 1909. But the petitioners were always careful to avoid making explicitly ethnic arguments. They explained only that Kigorobya 'in the past had been with Bugungu'.[1132] However, with Amin's regime soon embroiled in a war with Tanzania, various subsequent petitioners set their sights lower, demanding new sub-parish units in different parts of the county.[1133]

Amin's shadow, 1979-1985

But the security apparatus and administrative instruments that respectively repressed and rechannelled Gungu ethnic ambitions disappeared with Amin, when he was ousted in April 1979. And the disruption wrought by a succession of

[1131] 'Minutes of sub-district team, Bugungu' HDA, ADM 5/A/1.
[1132] Kaheeru to ADC North Bunyoro, 7 April 1977, MDA, BOX 574.
[1133] 'Minutes of the Bugungu Sub-District Team & Planning Committee held on 13th December 1977', HDA.5/2; Memorandum from Buliisa Sub-Parish to the Provincial Governor Western Province (Alex Owor), 12 April 1978, MDA, BOX 574.

transient armed visitors in the month or two after Amin had been deposed only intensified competition for resources in the lowlands.

Compared to many places, the impact of the 'Liberation War' on Buliisa 'had not been all that bloody and damageful', the county chief Kintu reported in June 1979. But the one man reportedly so 'full of joy' that he died 'due to over-drinking' was not the only person to suffer.[1134] As Amin's fleeing soldiers sought transport or went 'on the rampage', 'fishermen scattered'– many 'crossed to Zaire', fisheries officers reported.[1135] In the park, soldiers gunned down a lot of the few remaining animals for meat and ivory.[1136] The Tanzanian armed forces preparing to continue their pursuit of these men only compounded the disruption. These soldiers consumed more game and 'liberated' a lot of property from its lowland owners. As one fisher recalled, 'they ate my 28 goats. They left the small ones, [and] those died… [and] our canoes were being used [for firewood] to cook'.[1137] Some *magendoists* capitalised on the chaos.[1138] But it took two or three months for normal activities to resume on the lake.[1139]

The invasion and the UNLF's assumption of power was a period of loss and narrowing political possibility in the lowlands. During the seventy-or-so days he was in power, the new president, Yusuf Lule embarked on a conscious effort to undo some of the administrative atomisation of the Amin years. North and South Bunyoro districts – renamed Masindi and Hoima respectively – escaped

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[1134] Minutes Buliisa County Team, 4 June 1979, MDA, TRD.2
[1135] Monthly fisheries reports for March, April and May 1979, MDA, TRD.2; Int. Alur 13.
[1136] John Eames, 'The parks looted and the game shot out in Uganda', *Africana* 6, no. 12 (1979), pp. 3-4.
[1137] Int. Gungu 15c.
[1138] Monthly fisheries report for May 1979, MDA, TRD.2.
[1139] Monthly fisheries report for July 1979, HDA, ADM.14/3.

amalgamation under the administrative reforms that reduced the 39 districts to 23 as part of rather inconsistent wider project to erase their 'tribal' associations. But the lowlands – like every other sub-district in the country – lost its sub-district status. Reflecting its lack of active participation in Amin's removal regime, there was no representation from Bunyoro in first UNLF government.

In these straitened circumstances, barely supressed local antagonisms over entitlements and belonging re-emerged. The county chief reported 'much more misunderstanding' and 'disunity' in mid-1979. The fall of Amin's regime witnessed a backlash against Alur. Rumours circulated that Amin's Alur soldiers were making clandestine trips to 'their relatives in Ngwedo parish' and had been involved in violent incidents. In a June 1979 meeting, the county chief opined that those known to be harbouring such men 'should be expelled from Bugungu'.[1140] Administrative reports elliptically referred to a 'serious situation' having occurred in Buliisa in this regard.[1141] A fisheries officer noted the departure in July 1979 of 'a number of fishermen of Zairois origin'.[1142]

These tensions were only exacerbated by the interim government's introduction of elections at various levels for UNLF committees. Under the government of Godfrey Binaisa, who had been chosen, unexpectedly, to replace Lule in June 1979, indirect elections took place for the enlarged National Consultative Council – the interim parliament – and at different levels within the districts.[1143] As was the case elsewhere in Masindi and Hoima districts, elections to UNLF ad hoc branch

[1140] Minutes Buliisa County Team, 4 June 1979, MDA, TRD.2.
[1141] DC Hoima, 'Report on tribal conflict at Buhigiri School in Kigorobya Sub-County, 17 October 1979', HDA.
[1142] Monthly fisheries report for July 1979, HDA, ADM.14/3.
[1143] Cherry Gertzel, 'Uganda after Amin: The Continuing Search for Leadership and Control', *African Affairs* 79, no. 317 (1980), pp. 461-489 (475).

committees led to threats of physical violence in 'tribal conflicts' between the 'indigenous' people and 'migrants' or 'foreigners'.[1144]

But changing prospects at the national level changed the complexion of lowland politics in mid-1980. The old political cleavages between DP and UPC had been an implicit aspect of the UNLF from its outset. But the return of multi-party politics only seemed inevitable after Binaisa had been was deposed by the Military Commission chaired by Paulo Muwanga, an ally of Obote.[1145] The developments – pointing towards an election in December 1980 – had complex ramifications for Buliisa. The ex-Bunyoro districts were still UPC strongholds.[1146] Obote's return was met with great enthusiasm among the Gungu of Buliisa County in particular, owing to the large (nominally) protestant majority and their cherished memories of prosperity and unquestioned control in the 1960s. This situation was reflected by the UPC's selection of Yosam Mugenyi as candidate for MP for the Masindi North constituency, which included the lowlands. Mugenyi was a Gungu man from Kisansya. He had been a leading figure in BOSA-BUA at the turn of the 1960s before studying in the UK and beginning a civil service career that had seen him rise to head of the Department of Geological Survey and Mines.

But Obote's return also necessitated a rather uneasy inter-ethnic, inter-denominational political realignment and rapprochement. The UPC's ascendancy in the election in Buliisa would only be assured through a Gungu alliance with the Alur population in the lowlands which had swelled in the previous two decades.

[1144] DC Hoima, 'Report on tribal conflict at Buhigiri School in Kigorobya Sub-County, 17 October 1979', HDA.
[1145] Cherry Gertzel, 'Uganda after Amin: The Continuing Search for Leadership and Control', *African Affairs* 79, no. 317 (1980), pp. 461-489.
[1146] Int. Gungu 14c.

Though largely Catholic, the Alur population were expected to vote UPC out of enduring pan-Lwo solidarity with Obote –combined, in the case of the Zairean contingent, with gratitude towards his first government for having permitted their settlement.[1147] Recognising this Alur political preference, Gungu DP supporters attempted to raise the issue of their eligibility to vote by questioning their citizenship. This threat forced an Alur-Gungu UPC marriage of convenience which 'quelled' the citizenship question, one DP activist recalled.[1148]

The coalition held firm in the election. In many parts of the country during the campaign the DP had enjoyed great success in broadening its appeal beyond its original confessional and Ganda base. But in the ex-Bunyoro districts, this pattern did not hold. A 'sizeable majority' backed the UPC out of enduring loyalty and aversion to DP's leadership, which remained in the hands of a Catholic Ganda politician. In Buliisa County, in particular, the DP was 'totally overwhelmed by the strong UPC', recalled one DP devotee.[1149] The UPC controversially emerged victorious nationally.[1150] But Mugenyi would have probably emerged victorious even if no malpractice had taken place. According to the official results, Mugenyi received more than twice as many votes as the DP candidate who hailed from above the escarpment.

Violence severely affected other parts of Uganda after the 1980 election prompted the leaders of certain disgruntled parties to initiate armed struggle against the UNLA. But distance continued to insulate Bugungu from much of the conflict.

[1147] Int. Alur 1.
[1148] Int. Gungu 22a.
[1149] Int. Gungu 22a.
[1150] Justin Willis, Gabrielle Lynch, and Nic Cheeseman, '"A valid electoral exercise"? Uganda's 1980 Elections and the Observers' Dilemma', *CSSH* 59, no. 1 (2017), pp. 211-238.

The 'bush war' between the UNLA and Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA) guerrillas most heavily afflicted the area north of Kampala that became known as the Luweero Triangle. Before late 1985, Masindi and Hoima only featured in these military campaigns for brief moments in March and June 1984, when the NRA launched successful raids of barracks and armouries in the respective headquarters of these districts.[1151] The conflict between the UNLA and Amin's former soldiers was largely restricted to the borderlands between Sudan and what had previously been West Nile District, and directly impacted even less on Masindi District than the 'bush war'.

The war's indirect affects did not leave Buliisa untouched, however. While some people prospered through the usual channels, others experienced violence, sickness and immiseration. Fisheries officers noted that fish net theft by armed men was on the rise.[1152] This insecurity, coupled with a breakdown of trust between the owners of fishing businesses and their labourers, prompted the departure of many young Gungu men to lakes Kyoga and Victoria. Subsistence and illicit accumulation drove both the Gungu and Alur communities even further into 'poaching and encroaching', taking advantage of the financial constraints under which UNP continued to operate.[1153] A cholera outbreak led to several deaths at the turn of 1984, and the failure of rains for two years greatly affected small stock and necessitated famine relief. [1154]

[1151] McLean to Johnson, 11 December 1984, UKNA, FCO 31/4755; 'Masindi is assured of all protection', *Uganda Times* 8 March 1984.
[1152] Monthly fisheries report for July 1981, HDA; Monthly fisheries report for October 1981, HDA.
[1153] MFNP Ag. Chief Warden's Monthly Report for February 1985, RWP.
[1154] Medical Suppt. Masindi Hospital to PS Ministry of Health, 2 January 1984, HDA; R.M. Murasa (Commissioner for Rehabilitation) to DC Masindi, 17 September 1984, MDA, BOX617, SCW.19.

DP supporters perhaps suffered the most under UPC rule. It began during the 1980 election campaign in violence and intimidation of the DP by UPC Youth Wingers which evoked the 1964 struggle for the district council. Among the primary targets in 1980 was a young man called Fred Lukumu, a Catholic former employee of the Bank of Uganda who had campaigned unsuccessfully in the DP primaries in the same constituency as Mugenyi. Harassment continued after the election. 'It was even worse than Amin's time', one DP activist recalled of the Obote II years. 'It was a crime not to be affiliated to UPC'. [1155] DP supporters seen to be doing well in terms of business were labelled 'bandits', and faced extortion, intimidation, or worse. One trader, who had built his business under Amin, was murdered in 1985 at his commercial premises in Buliisa; his wife was abducted, her body never found. The perpetrators were never identified. [1156]

Buliisa's administrative status did not improve under Obote II, which refused to entertain such requests.[1157] Nevertheless, the regime enjoyed considerable legitimacy in the lowlands. UPC Gungu lowlanders found themselves rewarded for their loyalty to Obote. For the first time, Buliisa acquired a connection to the national political centre when Mugenyi was appointed Minister for Transport in early 1981. In textbook patrimonial fashion, Mugenyi directed some of the positions in his ministry and in the state-owned Uganda Transport Company to Gungu UPC loyalists.[1158] And although in this period the North Bunyoro District government remained toothless, chronically under-resourced, and therefore

[1155] Sam Y. Okaba Ag. Regional Fisheries Officer to PS Ministry of Animal Industry & Fisheries, 18 September 1984, MDA, ADM.20/1.
[1156] Int. Gungu 16a.
[1157] 'Do we need 33 districts?', *Uganda Times*, 29 January 1981.
[1158] Ints. Gungu 1a; Gungu 15c.

rather irrelevant in terms of patronage, one of Mugenyi's fellow ex-BOSA-BUA members, UPC man Blasio Mugasa, served as chairman of District Council.

During the 'bush war', the NRA recruited hundreds of young men from the plateau, especially the southern counties of Hoima District. But there were apparently only about three Gungu recruits, including one DP activist.[1159] This difference was partly the result of Buliisa's remoteness from what had long been the main theatres of action, but it also reflected contrasting politico-religious affiliations and economic differentials.

The political realignment of 1980 averted direct inter-ethnic confrontation despite the DP's best efforts. Inter-ethnic tensions were still perceptible. In response to a Gungu manager's misappropriation of funds from one cotton growers' society in the eastern hinterlands, a new organisation called 'Alur Ujai' – meaning 'the Alur have refused' – was founded, evoking memories of the early colonial Nyoro protest movement *Nyangire*.[1160] But even this bold Alur move spoke of the community's growing sense of security. The fact that the Alur in Buliisa could all claim to be Ugandan Alur rather than Zairean Alur, and were, at least in the regime's eyes, 'mainly supporters of UPC' meant that they were not persecuted like the Banyaruanda in the south and south-west of the country. The question of Alur citizenship seems to have been largely silenced. Senior party officials kept close tabs on the accusations that they were being 'victimised' in Bunyoro region.'[1161]

[1159] Int. Gungu 22a
[1160] Int. Alur 14.
[1161] 'Programme for Bunyoro', n.d., (c. January 1982), MDA, Box 567 or 660, Int.2(CR224/1).

Classificatory violence, 1985-1991

But the ousting of Obote II in mid-1985 ushered in an extended period of dramatic, seemingly relentless change in the lowlands. On 26 July 1985 the UPC lost power to Acholi officers, General Tito Okello Lutwa and Brigadier Bazilio Okello, who established another military council. Lowland figures strongly associated with the UPC, such as Mugenyi, fled to Zaire, some not to return for years. The old UPC order – both the Gungu political leaders and Alur clients – were bereft.[1162]

But there were further consequences which were catastrophic for all the inhabitants of the lowlands. The newly installed Lutwa regime was itself immediately threatened. Facing a mounting challenge in the form of the NRA, Lutwa attempted to bolster the UNLA through a deal with the leaders of the 'Anyanya' – southern Sudanese and West Nile rebel groups once associated with Amin. He also attempted to reach a peace agreement with the NRA at peace talks in Nairobi which began in late August. Both the NRA and the UNLA fought to control territory – and to create the illusion thereof through propaganda – in order to strengthen their relative positions in these negotiations. Confusion reigned. In September 1985, the NRA's Central Brigade under Major General David Tinyefuza launched an attempt to capture Hoima and Masindi districts.

The bush war finally hit Buliisa County in the first half of November 1985. After taking Hoima Town, NRA guerrilla units had infiltrated the rural areas around Masindi, which continued to be held by the UNLA. NRA guerrillas had made their way north towards the lowlands, reaching Butiaba at the foot of the escarpment by the middle of the month. UNLA/Former Uganda National Army (FUNA) Anyanya

[1162] Int.Gungu 14c.

reinforcements were airlifted in to a base near the Victoria Nile in the northern Albertine Rift at Ndandamire Primary School and at the park headquarters Paraa. The UNLA's Anyanya quickly alienated the residents of the lowlands owing to their acquisitive, 'merciless' behaviour.

Around 15 November, the vast majority of the Gungu community left the lowlands to escape. At a time of great uncertainty, some crossed to Zaire, but the majority went south on foot and by water either to Butiaba, where some stayed to monitor the situation, or to Gungu friends and relatives in NRA-held Kigorobya-Kitana, above the escarpment, and there readied themselves to jump in boats at Kibiro and travel to Zaire if necessary. Their cattle, in many cases left unattended, wandered towards the park boundary. The lowlands had witnessed another *kidemu*, as circumstances forced residents to seek refuge in many of the same places that the sleeping sickness epidemic had send them almost three quarters of a century earlier. 'As people say, history repeats itself', one informant reflected. [1163]

But unlike the evictions of 1909, it was Alur rather than Gungu who were in the majority among those who took to hiding in the bush to avoid displacement in 1985.[1164] And there were other inversions afoot once the NRA assumed control of the lowlands in February 1986. The years following the advent of the NRM era in Uganda further upended the Obote II political order. Burnt by the UPC's resurgence in the 1980 election, Museveni promoted a 'no-party' system of 'broad-based government'. The NRM's earlier approach to the politics of difference and belonging owed much to the leadership's experiences during the 'bush war' from

[1163] 'Minutes of Security Incidents Meeting' for, 19 & 26 November, and 10 & 17 December 1985, FCO 31/4759; Int. Gungu 16a.
[1164] Ints. Alur 4 & 14.

1980 to 1986. The NRA had gained traction in the diverse area known as the Luweero Triangle, particularly among the numerically preponderant Nyarwanda who had arrived in Uganda from Rwanda at different points over several decades, but had faced brutal persecution from the Obote regime on account of their alleged disloyalty. In areas the NRA controlled it instituted local resistance councils that defined citizenship on the basis of residence rather than 'indigeneity'.[1165]

But the regime discarded principles and promises with little hesitation. Commitments like 'no-party' or 'broad-based government' had little meaning in Uganda in this period. The National Resistance Council (NRC) that had replaced Lutwa's Military Council was initially only comprised of so-called 'historicals' – NRM soldiers and political cadres. Beyond the NRC, the DP-UPC duopoly persisted under the NRM banner. Inclusivity in the national government was initially largely limited to the embrace of DP men who had been downtrodden under the UPC regime. Museveni's decision to appoint the President-General of the DP, the Catholic Paul Ssemogerere, as Minister of Internal Affairs profoundly shaped perceptions of the new regime's preferences.[1166]

The DP's revived fortunes were replicated at the local level of governance in Buliisa, where the new political dispensation had compelled realignment. On its seizure of power, the NRM instituted a five-level system of elected 'Resistance Councils' (RCs) and corresponding executive committees, functioning in parallel with the hierarchy of appointed chiefs. The RCI represented the village, RCII the

[1165] Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), pp. 159–184.
[1166] Int. Gungu 15c.

parish, RCIII the sub-county, RCIV the county, and RCV the district (but the county level – RC4 – did not function in these years). Encouraged by the new political dispensation at Uganda's centre, Gungu DP men who had been terrorised under the Obote II regime came to the fore in local elections to the sub-county RCs in Buliisa County, drawing on the erstwhile tactics of their political opponents.

The enduring party loyalty demonstrated by the majority of Gungu lowlanders won certain UPC votaries' positions as chairmen on committees. But the most powerful RC positions were won by DP men – mainly Catholic long-term political aspirants from Ndandamire with relatively strong ties with the Alur community. It was the support of that community that secured these DP politicians the Biiso and Buliisa sub-county councils. For the Alur, the NRM's RC system had both opened up further space for their participation in local politics, and the departure of Obote had necessitated a search for new political patrons, producing this rapprochement. Now widely recognized as the 'kingmakers' in lowland politics, as one informant put it, the Alur had condemned the UPC to the political margins by realigning in accordance with the new national political order.[1167]

Confronted by the antipathy of a large section of the Gungu population, the ascendant DPs of Buliisa spearheaded various efforts to ameliorate tensions. Amid growing inter-ethnic competitition for state resources and linguistic recognition at the national level, educated Gunguin the diaspora in Kampala late 1986 came together to form a new generation of self-consciously elite ethnic association called the Bagungu Community Association (BaCA), with the same old hopes of

[1167] Ints. Gungu 1a & 15a.

transcending politico-religious divisions. One of the moving spirits of BOSA-BUA, a Catholic Ndandamire old boy called Cosmas M. Kato initiated and patronised this revival. Instituted on a 'non-political' basis and purported to bring 'development' to 'our homeland', it had re-emerged with a more overtly ethnic function. One of the various tasks it set itself in 1987 was getting Lugungu language programming on Radio Uganda. [1168]

The same year witnessed a unifying Gungu effort to expand patronage, resources and local control. DP-dominated sub-county councils evoked the practices and discourses of the Amin years when a review of local administration was conducted by the Museveni-appointed (Mamdani) Commission of Inquiry into the Local Government in 1987. Buliisa's councillors pushed for the restoration of sub-district status on the grounds of the county's remoteness. This claim represented the first step to resuscitate Amin-era efforts by Gungu elites to combine Buliisa County with Hoima District's Kigorobya Sub-County – jointly called 'our region' by the Gungu authors of BaCA's 1987 Constitution.[1169]

Lugungu language was granted a slot by Radio Uganda a few years later. But other Gungu initiatives failed. The preoccupation of BaCA's wealthier members was increasingly the organisation's commercial arm, Mwitanzige Ltd. Moreover, both BaCA and Mwitanzige were ultimately hamstrung by the very divisions they sought to transcend. [1170] Contrary to its original intentions, the Mamdani Commission's June 1987 report encouraged Museveni to demonstrate Aminesque receptivity to localist claim-making – he assented to recommendations for the

[1168] Chairman BaCA Abel Kaahwa to All Members, 24 November 1987, CKP.
[1169] 'The Constitution of Bagungu Community Association, 1987', CKP.
[1170] 'Minutes of First Meeting of Task Force to Mobilise Bagungu', 20 January 1997, CKP; Int. Gungu 22.

creation of four new districts elsewhere in the country. But the more modest demands advanced by Buliisa's RCIII councillors were denied by the Commissioners on the grounds that the Bukumi-Wanseko road was due to be rehabilitated.[1171]

A sense of ethno-civilisational crisis increasingly took hold in Buliisa. BaCA's Chairman wrote to the RCIIIs of the three sub-counties of Gungu 'region', complaining of the 'bad habits' of 'our people'. These worse offences included 'over-drinking', using 'bad language', and demonstrating a 'lack of good attention to families affairs and education' (*sic*)'.[1172] These narratives were tied to perceptions of ecological disorder. Famine and both familiar and unfamiliar deadly diseases stalked the land, and hyena and lion increasingly looked beyond the (contested) park boundary for prey.[1173] Gungu petitioners claimed that the lake had been 'spoiled', provoking an increased focus on cultivation and cattle-rearing which was in turn transforming the county into a 'desert'.[1174]

Economic conditions, combined with collectivising punishments by the NRM, threatened Gungu conceptions of ethno-civilisational status. Underlying concerns about the fisheries was falling demand and prices for fish in Zaire, the high cost of both fuel for engine boats and salt, thefts of fishing nets, and NRM attempt's to crackdown on both the thriving illegal cross-border barter trade and, ironically, destructive fishing practices.[1175] These state interventions foundered on lack of

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[1171] Deo Kasana, 'Letter to the editor', *New Vision*, 6 February 1989; Uganda, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Local Government System* (Kampala, 1987), pp. 137-138.
[1172] Abel R. Kaahwa to various, 21 April 1988, CKP.
[1173] 'Cholera outbreak feared in Masindi', *New Vision*, 5 September 1986; 'Hyena eats drunkard', *New Vision*, 2 May 1989.
[1174] George Kawule, 'Is Lake Albert overfished?', *New Vision*, 30 November 1992.
[1175] 'Illegal barter trade thrives', *New Vision*, 14 December 1987.

both resources to police the lake and co-operation from 'local authorities' implicated in illegal fishing practices and trade. But the June 1987 ban on both fishing times and certain types of gear had generated fears for 'very survival' of the 'indigenous fishermen', according to one impassioned petition signed by political leaders and representatives of the fishermen.[1176]

Certain Gungu elites attempted to exploit this situation, to reinscribe ethno-civilisational hierarchy and difference. Bereft UPC devotees among them often blamed 'Zaireans'/'foreigners', in often unmistakably coded reference to their erstwhile political partners, the county's Alur inhabitants – regardless of their nationality. Perceived political insubordination was recast as barbarism stood accused of net-theft, witchcraft, 'land-grabbing', and cannibalism; but it was the Zaireans' putative contraventions of fishing regulations that drew most of Gungu political focus entrepreneurs focused on in their petitions. They cast themselves as civilised custodians of the fish breeding grounds that others abused. 'What humiliates us most is the fact that (...) these foreigners are operating so freely with their destructive nets (...) and (...) can afford to quieten anybody who may wish to challenge their work'. They warned – with menacing ambiguity – that 'an exodus is in sight'.[1177]

Intimidation of the Alur at the landing sites had not stopped the DP-Alur alliance emerging victorious in the RC elections of February 1989. For the first time, Buliisa's two sub-counties' RCs, from the village and parish level, gathered as an electoral college to elect the county's one representative to the expanded

[1176] Regional fisheries report for September 1991, HDA, ADM.14/3; Regional fisheries reports for December 1990 and April 1991, HDA, ADM.14/3.
[1177] Various to [Dr Masaba?] Minister of Animal Industry and Fisheries, n.d. (but July or August 1987), CKP.

parliament – the National Resistance Council – and three District RC members. In the battle for NRC representative, DP man Fred Lukumu, Buliisa's RCIII Secretary, defeated a member of BaCA's executive committee, urban officer Naftali Bigirwenkya by 52 votes to 24. Amid this febrile political atmosphere, BaCA collapsed. [1178]

Contestations over citizenship lay at the heart of certain violent local struggles over local control, recognition, and access to resources. Self-declared Gungu spokesmen were urged by the government to redirect their political focus to the Uganda Constitutional ('Odoki') Commission, which was established in 1989 to review the constitution and to draft a new one on the basis of consultations with the populace.[1179] The only qualification for citizenship made in the independence Constitution of 1962 had been a residency requirement of five years. The interim report by the Odoki Commission submitted in December 1990 revealed a widespread and intense sense of 'resentment' 'tainted with prejudice and ignorance' about this arrangement. As Ugandans tended 'to confuse national citizenship with tribal identity', exclusionary practices of more established and secure groups of self-styled 'indigenes' were sometimes directed towards those widely considered to have a more tenuous right to belong in Uganda.[1180]

For a time, the NRM regime attempted to canalise such political energies. Having caved in to Western economic policy prescriptions in the form of structural

[1178] 'Minutes of First Meeting of Task Force to Mobilise Bagungu', 20 January 1997, CKP; Int. Gungu 22.
[1179] Uganda Constitutional Commission, *Guiding questions on constitutional issues* (Kampala, 1990). Many memoranda can be found in Makerere University Library.
[1180] Uganda Constitutional Commission, *Interim Report of the Uganda Constitutional Commission* (Kampala: Uganda Constitutional Commission, 1990), p. 11; 'Sectarian violence erupts in Masindi', *New Vision*, 23 September 1991.

adjustment programmes in 1987, the regime waged revolutionary rhetorical war on Western cultural imperialism.[1181] An ethnological impulse was increasingly perceptible and instrumentalised. A few months after Museveni's apparent ideological conversion, the NRM set up its National Culture Committee, the aim was to 'ensure that the different cultures are organised and used in the implementation of the ten-point programme of the NRM'.[1182] Against the backdrop of UNESCO's World Decade for Cultural Development, the NRM created its Directorate of Cultural Affairs in 1990, and declared plans to formulate a national policy on culture.[1183] The regime hoped to turn activism into economic activity and cultural production for display in cultural museums and at events such as the Uganda Cultural Festival, planned for 1991, on the theme of 'Culture for Unity in Development'.[1184]

The ethnological vision quickly insinuated itself into the national debate over citizenship. The Odoki Commission had received various possible solutions to this issue from members of the public . But the recommendation that began to prevail envisaged the transformation of citizenship eligibility into a matter of ethnic categories. Rather than a right determined solely by geographic residence, the possibility of citizenship from birth was slated to be restricted to those born in Uganda who had a parent or grandparent from a Ugandan ethnic group—whatever that was to mean in practice.[1185] This path disregarded the very same

[1181] Chango Machyo w'Obanda, 'Need to have a cultural stand', *New Vision*, 27 July 1989.
[1182] David Mukwaya, 'Cultural museums to be set up', *New Vision*, 4 August 1987.
[1183] Geoffrey Mugarura and Willie Aguma, 'Culture policy in offing', 6 September 1990.
[1184] 'How culture promotes development', *New Vision*, 24 December 1991.
[1185] Uganda Constitutional Commission, *Interim Report of the Uganda Constitutional Commission* (Kampala: Uganda Constitutional Commission, 1990), p. 13.

1990 report's fears on the subject of possible consequences of such a criteria. The regime had 'backed off from the political promise of Luwero'.[1186] Redefining citizenship in this way necessitated the creation of an ethnological inventory. Just weeks after the interim report of the Odoki Commission had been submitted, the directorate of the National Population and Housing Census (NPHC) had, for the first time since the last colonial census of 1959, included a question about ethnicity in a population census.[1187] It marked the beginning of a process that was to lead to an unusual innovation in the 1995 Constitution: an ethnonymic inventory: a 56-strong list of 'Uganda's indigenous communities'.[1188] This document came to include Gungu category thanks to the efforts of Buliisa's representative to the Constituent Assembly who contested a shorter, 48-strong list that had appeared in the Odoki Commission's 1993 draft constitution. But it was also to included the Alur category. The NRM's politically expedient formalisation of the politics of indigeneity offered little to the Gungu UPC faction, owing to the ambiguous national provenance of many of the Alur in Buiiiisa.

Matters began to come to a head in 1991. Net thefts by gunmen, and net confiscations the Zairean authorities, led to the loss of not only nets worth millions of shillings, and therefore livelihoods, but also some lives in the first few months of 1991.[1189] The situation was compounded by Uganda authorities increasing efforts to eliminate undersize gill nets, and all beach seine nets in

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[1186] Mahmood Mamdani, 'African States, Citizenship and War: A Case-Study', *International Affairs* 78, 3 (2002), pp. 493–506 (p. 497).
[1187] Alfred Wasike, 'Coming census will catalyze change', *New Vision*, 13 December 1990; Republic of Uganda, *1990 Population and Housing Census: Enumerator's Instructions* (Entebbe 1990), p. 16. In the 1991 census results, Gungu and Nyoro both appeared as categories, albeit under a shared a response code.
[1188] Somewhat misleadingly, the full title is 'Uganda's indigenous communities as at 1st February, 1926'.
[1189] Regional fisheries report for April 1991, HDA, ADM.14/3.

August 1991.[1190] Alur had been 'encouraged' to leave in the face of an increasingly 'negative attitude towards their presence on the part of the Bagungu', leading to a 50 per cent reduction in the size of the Wanseko fishing fleet, according to UN FAO researchers who visited the area that same month.[1191]

In September 1991, affronted UPC Gungu RCII and RCI in their party's lowland stronghold of Kisiabi Parish took matters into their own hands through the appropriation of classificatory violence. Apparently against the advice of Masindi District Administrator, elected officials issued 'all non-Bagungu' in the fishing villages between Wanseko and Butiaba with an 'eviction order', giving them two days to leave. After the deadline passed without response, in the middle of the month the same men who had issued the ultimatum took drastic, violent action which was to earn Buliisa an unusual and ignominious place in the national spotlight. For about three days the Alur in several landing sites close to Buliisa Town in Kisiabi Parish were attacked by a Gungu mob wielding 'pangas, clubs, bows and arrows', according to reports by journalists and fisheries officers. Before district authorities and the NRA were able to intervene and halt the expulsion, great destruction was carried out, sending shockwaves throughout the county. Several Alur were murdered and over 400 of their houses were razed or knocked down as they were 'herded' in their hundreds to the lake, and forced into boats to Zaire and the shorelines of Nebbi District. These evictees were quickly joined by other Alur, fleeing the villages on the northern and southern shorelines of the county owing to fears of receiving the same treatment. Even Alur living in the

[1190] Regional fisheries report for September 1991, HDA, ADM.14/3.
[1191] J. Eric Reynolds and Jessica S. Kitakule, 'Field Document No.2 : Socio-economic aspects of lakes Victoria and Albert fisheries: the 1991 FISHIN community survey', 1991, FAO Online Archive, UGA/87/007.

hinterland of the county in Bugana and Ngwedo parishes began to uproot their recently planted cotton crop in preparation to take flight. Officials across the water in Nebbi District's Panyimur estimated that about 12 boatloads of people escaped the violence.[1192]

Conclusion

Once political circumstance extinguished hopes of contestation or inversion by other means, hierarchies of ethno-civilisationalism were reinscribed through the collectivising punishment against the Alur in Bugungu in 1991 by a disgruntled political faction among the increasingly insecure Gungu community. The previous two decades had strained state-society relations, attenuating links between intra-district centres and peripheries on multiple levels, sharpening local inequality and competition between and within communities, and engendering a strong sense of political, ecological and moral crisis. These processes had destabilised images of ethno-civilisational hierarchy, exhibiting the the ramifying, cascading legacies of colonial intra-African racialisation. '[E]xterminatory violence', as Jonathan Glassman puts it, 'tend[s] to be accompanied by rhetoric in

[1192] Regional fisheries reports for September and October, both HDA, ADM.14/3; James Thopaco, 'Sectarian violence erupts in Masindi', *New Vision*, 23 September 1991; George Kawule, 'Tension in Masindi subsides', *New Vision*, 3 October 1991. As part of a diatribe against Alur ethno-toponymic encroachment on the lowlands, one UPC diehard attempted to justify the 1949 colonial-era eviction by invoking a version of the past that had been distorted by time and present-day concerns. He claimed that Wankende landing site had been named by the 'boasting' Alur in the late 1940s would say in their dialect of Lwo the words '*waani kende* (*waamiito ngo Magungo*)', which meant that the place was 'for us only (we do not want the Bagungu)'. Yet, this toponym had been well-established in the colonial records as far back as the early thirties. Older Gungu interviewees contended that Wankende simply meant 'the place of monkey' (*nkende*), as 'there were many monkeys there' in the species of tree known locally as *mikinga*. See Int. Gungu 6a, 6b, & 5b.

which ethnic categories are imagined as hierarchical strata, linked to one another in relationships that structure the entire society'.[1193]

Classificatory violence on this scale did not repeat itself for some time. Activists found new stratagems for the pursuit of local control and historical grievance involved the paired invocations of of 'indigeneity' and 'ethnic minority' status.[1194] Smaller, less-known communities on the margins who found themselves re-subsumed in 1993-1994 by the government-sanctioned restoration of old kingdoms in the form of 'cultural institutions'. In a bid to secure former's electoral support and recentralise power, particularly in response to the return of multi-partyism in 2006, the regime distributed patronage by creating new administrative districts and electoral constituencies.[1195] The government transformed the Gungu district minority into an apparent 'majority', as Buliisa was granted district status in July 2006 by way of reward for NRM electoral loyalty, in response to sustained local lobbying from BaCA and the local council. Museveni audaciously cast such fragmentation as a part of radical project of liberation from 'sub-colonialism' and 'cultural chauvinism'.[1196]

[1193] J. Glassman, 'Slower than a massacre: The Multiple Sources of Racial Thought in Colonial Africa', *The American Historical Review* 109, no. 3 (2004), pp. 720-754 (730).

[1194] Minority status was not unproblematic or unambiguous in a country where no one ethnic group constituted more than 17 per cent of the population. Museveni's government was resistant in terms of legal frameworks and international instruments related to this aspect of international human rights discourse; Uganda failed to ratify the Declaration of the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1992.

[1195] The number of districts went up from 33 in 1990 to 80 in 2006, and were to reach about 130 in 2017. The number of MPs went up from 319 in 2006 to 426 in 2016.

[1196] Yoweri Museveni, 'Address To The Nation', *New Vision*, 13 September 2004. The knowledge produced by Museveni's state took on an increasingly ethnological character, undergirded by the constitutional oddity that was the

District status proved scarcely any better as weapon with which to confront profound, multiplying, inter-connected challenges. Intensifying environmental crisis took the form of ever more extreme periods of drought and floods. The discovery of world-class oil reserves at sites across Buliisa by an Anglo-Irish exploration company in the mid-to-late 2000s involved and triggered militarisation and capitalist encroachment, enclosures, and land speculation. Struggles over shares in the proceeds of commercial exploitation pitted parties within Buliisa against both central government and Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom. Certain political interests were further threatened a demographic shift successive influxes of Alur refugees from the wartorn Democratic Republic of Congo since the late 1990s, and Nyarwanda transhumant cattle herders hailing from far to the south-west in the Uganda-Rwanda borderlands but present in a more subordinate, marginal fashion since at least as far back as the 1960s.

Those in power in the lowlands held on through the deflection and infliction of ethno-civilisationalism's discourses and practices on ethnic others. Perceived political insubordination in regard to elections continued to be met with renewed Gungu accusations of essential barbarity and criminality of 'marauding' interlopers.[1197] Gungu political entrepreneurs attempted the mass expulsion of the Alur in 2004 and the Nyarwanda in 2007. After several years of courtroom struggles and flashpoints of inter-communal violence, an increasingly authoritarian, militarist state took matters into their own hands in early December

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Third Schedule, to which the government agreed to augment by nine ethnic categories. Uganda Bureau of Statistics, *Uganda Population and Housing Census: Analytical Report: Population Composition* (Kampala, 2006), pp. 21–26; Republic of Uganda, 'The Uganda National Cultural Policy: A culturally vibrant, cohesive and progressive nation', December 2006.

[1197] Abel Kagoro, 'The refugees have abused our kindness', *New Vision*, 26 October 2004

2010, as state security agencies carried out the extrajudicial 'Operation Restore Justice': a mass eviction of thousands of Nyarwanda and 10,000-20,000 heads of their cattle. Gungu discourses now promulgated a self-image as part of the national developmental mainstream of sedentary farmers in order to appealed to the NRM state 's ethno-civilisational imperatives concerning the 'indisciplined herdsmen' who simply needed to 'abandon their backward practices'.[1198]

[1198] Yoweri Museveni, 'President's statement on Buliisa conflict', *New* Vision, 19 July 2007.

CONCLUSION

'Now what's going to happen to us without barbarians?'.[1199]

Africans in Uganda have not experienced a singular regime of violent punishment during their encounter with the modern bureaucratic state. The violence of punishment manifested colonialism's defining ambivalence. Colonial rule could be conceived as 'civilising', 'improving', and 'tutelary' in holding out the promise of merging the Other with the Self – the 'uncivilised' with the 'civiliser'. But it also worked to preserve fundamental, unbridgeable alterity, marking and maintaining the 'colonial rule of difference' between colonised and coloniser – between 'civilised' and 'uncivilised'.[1200] Races are, as Paul Gilroy puts it, 'assembled, conjured into being, by the – usually violent – workings of racism'.[1201] This inscription ramified throughout African society; in a society structured by such racial domination, it is through the 'modality' of race that ethnicity – and all other axes of difference – are refracted, structured, and experienced, as it is put by Jemima Pierre, following Stuart Hall.[1202] As ideas and practices of violent punishment cascaded, they racialised inter-ethnic relations.

[1199] C.P. Cavafy, 'Waiting for the Barbarians', in George Savidis (ed.), *Collected Poems* (Princeton, NJ, 1975), p. 33.
[1200] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Oxford, 1994), p. 10.
[1201] Paul Gilroy, 'Never Again: Refusing race and salvaging the human', *New Frame*, 20 June 2019, <https://www.newframe.com/long-read-refusing-race-and-salvaging-the-human/> (accessed 10 August 2020).
[1202] Jemima Pierre, *The predicament of blackness : postcolonial Ghana and the politics of race* (Chicago, 2013), 5. Following, Stuart Hall, 'Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance', in UNESCO (ed.) *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (Paris, 1980), pp. 305-345 (341)

Colonial officials were wont to conceive of such punishment as 'civilising'; the violent dispossession faced by forest peoples was understood as a means of forcible assimilation of 'dying races' into other 'more civilised' collectivities.[1203] But in effect, the violence of punishment was profoundly *classificatory*. The classificatory violence of collectivising punishment produced and reproduced ethnic difference and hierarchy. This form of violence drew on and inscribed ideas of ethno-civilisational superiority and inferiority, reflecting the colonial encounter's instrumental assimilation and reworking of a complex bundle of interrelated local taxonomies and stereotypes concerning livelihoods, gender, demography, environments, and positions in the economic structure and in relation to centralising units of socio-political organisation.

At the margins where such ideas were practised they were felt more sharply and meaningfully than what one scholar has considered the 'suggestive outlines' provided by other identificatory technologies of colonial governance and knowledge production.[1204] The colonial state brought to bear unprecedented – if still rather limited, inconsistent, and incoherent– coercive, intellectual, and bureaucratic resources in inculcating this way of ordering communities. It did so most powerfully through African 'outsiders' placed in the role of sub-coloniser among the sub-colonised. Such arrangements were unusual in most parts of the country. As Connor Cavanagh puts it, 'diverse populations have been unevenly affected by these now often forgotten processes of intra-African racialisation'. [1205]

[1203] Connor Joseph Cavanagh, 'Dying races, deforestation and drought: the political ecology of social Darwinism in Kenya Colony's western highlands', *Journal of Historical Geography* 66 (2019), pp. 93-103 (94).
[1204] James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Athens, OH, 2012), p. 12.
[1205] Cavanagh, 'Dying races', p. 102

This differential and differentiating punitive mode emerged in the wars of colonial conquest in interaction with local substrates of chauvinism. 'In small wars against uncivilized nations', advised one British military thinker of the time, 'the form of warfare to be adopted must tone with the shade of culture existing in the land, by which I mean that, against peoples possessing a low civilization, war must be more brutal in type'.[1206] But these ideas and practices were sustained by the colony – 'a site in which "peace" is more likely to take on the face of a "war without end"'.[1207] Reactions and counter-reactions to early violence generated cycles of distrust, and sporadic efforts to more powerfully assert state authority that in turn made it more, not less difficult to shape 'more civilised' (i.e. more compliant) colonial subjects by other means – through the criminalisation and punishment of political contestation and insubordination.[1208] Classificatory violence persisted endured through colonial administrative structures and cultures in post-colonial Uganda.

But this thesis does not assign a determining, unilateral role to the colonial state and its agents. Africans frequently challenged, resisted, and appropriated classificatory violence, and the ethno-civilisational stereotypes and markers that underpinned it. As discriminating and discriminatory state violence ramified, it was internalised, and deflected, sometimes with shocking consequences. The dizzying reversals, inversions and ironies of Buliisa's past has left the Gungu category uneasily poised between subject and object of degradation; between victim and perpetrator of domination, displacement, dispossession, and

[1206] J.F.C. Fuller, *The reformation of war* (London, 1923), 103.
[1207] Achille Mbembe, 'Necropolitics', *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003), pp. 11-40 (23).
[1208] Paul Nugent, *Boundaries, communities, and state-making in West Africa: the centrality of the margins* (Cambridge, 2019), p. 20.

exploitation; and between resistance and embrace of the logics and rubrics of colonialism. So-called 'ethnic conflict' of the sort Buliisa has so often witnessed, has developed 'against and through' Africa's 'relation to global racialized hierarchies'.[1209]

This thesis works against the Ugandanist historiography's headline rivalries and underlying civilisational narratives. It encourages the redirection of attention to elusive events and processes at the interstices, in an effort to disrupt the dichotomies – Bantu and non-Bantu, centralised and less centralised – that continue to powerfully shape the way Uganda is viewed and studied. [1210] These labels have often obscured the trajectories of particular political cultures – evolving in the encounter with the modern bureaucratic state – over the past 150 years or more, revealing an ambiguous marginality at the nexus between language groups, forms of political organisation, and environmental niches that structure conventional views of Uganda. These places 'betwixt and between' in Uganda's history has often been ignored as scholars uncritically accepted and reproduced an underlying ethno-spatial ordering that tended to reflect and reinforce power relations between and within communities. This ordering was long ago described by anthropologist Aidan Southall as the 'convenient myth of Uganda as composed of Buganda and twelve other district tribes'.[1211] Without puncturing this myth, and understanding the ethno-civilisational ideas and practices that it shaped, and by which it was itself shaped, the task of understand the animating forces behind the politics of identity in today's Uganda is rendered extremely difficult. To this end, it

[1209] Pierre, *The Predicament*, p. 5.
[1210] For a recent addition to this historiography, see Reid, *A history*.
[1211] Aidan W. Southall, 'The current state of national integration in Uganda', in D. R. Smock and K. Bentsi-Enchill (eds.), *The search for national integration in Africa* (New York, 1976), pp. 307-331 (pp. 311-312).

is necessary to probe the shadows and interstices of the tribal categories of the Andersonian census, map, and museum.[1212]

The enduring marks of classificatory violence are subjected to fresh public inspections through new frames of discourse and action in the dim light of contemporary Uganda. One such framing arrived attached to the word 'indigenous' – a term that had been in wide domestic usage, with different significance, for some time. The worldwide 'indigenous peoples' movement that emerged in the 1970s was led by aboriginal communities largely from white settler colonies in the Americas and Australasia in reaction against the assimilationist tendencies of a human rights law hitherto in thrall to the 'nation state' model. Activists around the world sought domestic constitutional and legal provisions for definition and recognition of this political category, and African judicial discourse came to assimilate this term in the mid-2000s owing largely to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities, established in 2003 by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), and support from a handful of international NGOs, including Copenhagen-based International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA). In Uganda activism first focused on no more than half a dozen ethnic communities conventionally seen as hunter-gatherers (e.g. Twa, Benet, and Ik) or transhumant pastoralists (e.g. Tepeth, and Ngikaramajong).[1213] But a larger movement coalesced with assistance from

[1212] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, 1991), pp. 163-185.
[1213] African Commission on Human and People's Rights Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities, *Research and Information Visit to the Republic of Uganda 2006* (Banjul, 2008).

various international and national civil society actors of 'NGO-ised' Ugandan society.[1214]

The analytical emphasis of the scholarship on African involvement in this movement has tended to be strongly instrumentalist. The dominance of this perspective is perhaps unsurprising. While the decades of neoliberal capitalism since the 1980s have ravaged Africa, these years saw the development of generous and well-resourced international NGOs, and an international jurisprudence that conferred an unusual range of privileges on 'indigenous peoples': from the right to the protection of identity and, even in the face of development projects, their collective cultural property – including state-controlled resources – to the rights to education, employment, health, religion, language and more. Scholars have tended to see invocations of indigenous rights largely in terms of extraversion – as a strategy for accessing resources from states and civil society organisations, frequently to the detriment of ethnic 'others'.[1215]

But there is a need to understand the historical dimensions of communities' articulations of conceptions of indigeneity. The literature has seen little elaboration of references to 'real and remembered histories cultural experiences and pasts' and 'historically sedimented practices, landscapes and repertoires of

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[1214] Frederic Musisi, 'Minority tribes meet', *The Monitor*, 14 December 2012; and Equal Opportunities Commission, 'Press release for International Day of the World's Indigenous People', 10 August 2017 <https://www.eoc.go.ug/media-updates/2017/08/press-release-international-day-world's-indigenous-people> (accessed 10 August 2020). NGOs such Kampala-based Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda and London-based Minority Rights Group featured prominently in this movement.

[1215] For example, see Jim Igoe 'Becoming indigenous peoples: difference inequality and the globalization of East African identity politics', *African Affairs* 105, no. 420 (2006), pp. 399-430; Gabrielle Lynch, 'Becoming indigenous in the pursuit of justice: the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Endorois', *African Affairs* 111, no. 442 (2011), pp. 24-45.

meaning'.[1216] In order to 'more fully or empathetically understand the motivations, grievances and aspirations', Cavanagh argues, it is necessary to adopt a 'post-colonial vantage point', examining 'the continuities between colonial discourses and contemporary arguments'.[1217] Such a perspective is possible by using the transformation of the category of indigenous peoples as a lens. The legal category had at first been synonymous with 'first peoples'; but this definition had increasingly been complicated by the presence of African and Asian activists in the movement. It needed new definitions that would accommodate those people in the post-colonial countries who claimed to experience the same structural role as 'first peoples'; the outcome was though heavily contested and contestable. The new definition came to be associated with the notion of vulnerable 'culturally distinct' non-Western societies who had experience of marginalisation, dispossession, and internal colonialism linked to particular stigmatised livelihoods, and related custodial connections to environments and territories.

The indigenous peoples movement became a key discursive medium through which ideas of ethno-civilisationalism and the enduring marks of classificatory violence could be debated, appropriated, reworked, and inverted. Anthropologist Adam Kuper put it simply, but quite provocatively: 'the term 'indigenous' became a euphemism 'for what used to be termed "primitive"'.[1218] It can be seen to represent a means by which claims of having experienced the sharper edge of

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[1216] Tania Murray Li, 'Articulating Indigenous Identity in Indonesia: Resource Politics and the Tribal Slot', *CSSH* 42, no . 1 (2000), pp. 149-179 (152); Gabrielle Lynch, 'Kenya's New Indigenes: Negotiating Local Identities in a Global Context', *Nations and Nationalism* 17, no. 1 (2011), pp. 148–167.
[1217] Connor Joseph Cavanagh, 'Dying races, deforestation and drought: the political ecology of social Darwinism in Kenya Colony's western highlands', *Journal of Historical Geography* 66 (2019), pp. 93-103 (102).
[1218] Adam Kuper, 'Return of the native', *Current Anthropology* 44, no. 3 (2003), pp. 389-402.

differentiated colonial subjection can be parlayed for the privileges of differentiated citizenship. As the ACHPR Working Group put it, '[t]erms such as "underdeveloped", "backward", "primitive" and worse are regularly applied to some people and not others'.[1219]

The movement shaped a new generation of Gungu activism. Activists had started to question the legitimacy and monopoly of the intermittently functioning BaCA – made up of Kampala elites, including a Gungu rentier tycoon and electoral financier who had obtained land titles in strategic locations across Buliisa's oil fields. An educated but economically struggling cohort in their thirties, based largely in Buliisa, took action through bold new initiatives, while French, Chinese, and Anglo-Irish international oil companies and the government found themselves locked in disputes over taxes and refinery and export plans – especially after the price crash of 2014. Indigenous rights discourses inflected the promotional material of the Bugungu Heritage Information Centre (BHIC) formed in 2013 by activist Kiiza Patrick Wilson, and the launching of a related – but as yet unsuccessful – bid for an official, state-supported 'cultural institution' by means of 'cultural secession' from the Bunyoro Kingdom. The indigenous rights agenda (along with Ken Saro-Wiwa's Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People in the Niger Delta) was explicitly invoked in the Lake Albert Indigenous People Survival Movement (LAIPSUM), formed by a teacher-activist in 2014. [1220]

[1219] African Commission on Human and People's Rights, *Report of the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities* (New Jersey, 2005), p. 14

[1220] Munyomo Robert, 'Open letter', Facebook, 29 May 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/notes/kiiza-patrick-wilson/open-letter-to-unesco-by-munyomo-robert/706548242740133> (Accessed 10 August 2020);Herbert Munyomo, 'Tilenga project could extinguish native Bagungu', *New Vision* 21 November 2018

Gungu activists – like many others have – have experienced marginalisation within this movement of the marginal, however. To a certain extent this situation reflects activists' lack of both clear grasp of the movement's framing and the right connections with the government, UN agencies, and organisations such as the ACHPR's Working Group and the IWGIA. But it also reflects the uneven distribution of wider legitimacy of claims to this exceptional status – just like claims of superior ethno-civilisational status among certain Africans under colonial rule. There are even apparent different tiers between and among even those conventionally seen the hunter-gatherers and transhumant pastoralists atop the hierarchy of dehumanisation.

Today's unformalised hierarchy of ethno-civilisationalism has been shaped by various institutions. The NRM government has played a role, even while failing to grant the category constitutional recognition, to ratify UN ILO's 1989 Convention 169, or to vote on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. Indigenous rights remain, by definition, a marginal issue, with politically unpalatable entailments, which the government has found little difficulty in resisting.[1221] But broad support for, and rhetorical use of, the category in relation to 'top-tier' claimant communities has issued from the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development and the Equal Opportunities Commission, established in the late 2000s. This limited form of recognition from the government has influenced and been influenced by not only self-identified indigenous peoples themselves, but also outside specialists and advisers at the UN agencies, the ACHPR's

[1221] Rane Willerslev and Lotte Meinert, 'Understanding Hunger with Ik Elders and Turnbull's The Mountain People', *Ethnos*, 82, no. 5 (2017), 820–845 (p. 840–841).

Working Group and NGOs such as the IWGIA, who publish annual reports that validate the claims of a select few communities.[1222]

Even *de facto* categorisations have had consequences. A deficit in the wider legitimacy of Gungu claims came to light in mid-2018 in heated discussions over the $3-4 billion Tilenga Project – an Industrial Area and a Central Processing Facility backed by a consortium led by Paris-based multinational oil corporation Total SA – planned for Buliisa's inland north-east.[1223] As well as impacting many people less directly, it required displacement of dozens of families and the compulsory acquisition – at a government-specified rate of compensation – of some 800 acres of relatively fertile land. But the project's developers claimed that they were not obliged to conduct an extended community engagement and consultation process that would have been required in regard to 'indigenous people' under the rules of the World Bank's International Financial Corporation.[1224] In support of these claims, the project consultants had invoked the absence of the Gungu category from the IWGIA's reports.

The indigenous peoples movement has appeared in more than one guise in contemporary Uganda, however. One newer movement has emerged in connection with indigenous peoples' claims to specialised knowledges and

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[1222] For details of an important Twa legal challenge to the government's position, see Jérémie Gilbert & Kanyinke Sena, 'Litigating indigenous peoples' cultural rights: Comparative analysis of Kenya and Uganda', *African Studies* 77, no. 2 (2018), pp. 204-222.

[1223] About 190,000 barrels of oil per day, collected from dozens of wells, will be processed by this intensely exploited and secured extractive enclave.

[1224] AECOM/Eco & Partner Consult, *EA-1/EA-1A & EA-2 North Project ESIA Scoping Report* (2015) <https://ug.total.com/sites/g/files/wompnd1236/f/atoms/files/ea1_1a_ea2_north_project_esia_scoping_report.pdf> (accessed 10 August 2020); Herbert Munyomo, 'Tilenga project could extinguish native Bagungu', *New Vision* 21 November 2018

proclivities vis-à-vis the natural world. These 'conservationist' practices drew the attention of part of the global environmental movement that one scholar termed the 'dark green religion'.[1225] A key organisation of this variety is the relatively small but highly influential Gaia Foundation, established in the mid-1980s in Hampstead, north London, by a white activist in exile from apartheid-era South Africa, and her British businessman husband. Named after the ancient Greek mother earth goddess – and, in turn, James Lovelock's famous 1970 'hypothesis' – the Gaia Foundation takes inspiration from many sources. But at the centre of the mission of such organisations is the re-spiritualisation of human relations with the natural world in order to rediscover a 'lost harmony'.

The philosophy and approach promoted by such organisations involves particular conceptions about indigenous peoples. Gaia is closely connected to indigenous peoples movement activists and organisations, counting among its longstanding associates and advisors a white Canadian sociolinguist called Nigel Crawhall, who for many years was the Director of the Secretariat for the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee.[1226] Among Gaia's first patrons was Laurens van der Post, Afrikaner conservationist (in)famous for his obsessive quest for 'unspoilt Edens' and 'unspoilt Africans' in central and southern Africa.[1227] Gaia presents a similarly romanticised, essentialised, and ethnicised view of indigenous peoples, particularly nature shrine custodians it casts as the embodiment of Rousseau's

[1225] Bron Taylor, *Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future* (Berkeley, 2009).
[1226] An informal network of African indigenous peoples activists founded by a Moroccan lawyer in 1997.
[1227] For more on this individual, who deeply influenced both Prince Charles and Margaret Thatcher, see John McCracken, 'Imagining Nyika Plateau: Laurens van der Post, the Phoka and the Making of a Natural Park', *JSAS* 32, no. 4 (2006), pp. 807-821.

concept of the ecologically 'noble savage'. The villains of the piece, according to Gaia, are colonialism and Christianity; capitalism rears its head only in the for of multinational resource extraction companies – not as a system that has profoundly shaped relationships between and among peoples and their environment.[1228]

Gaia's approach involves combining these ideas about the nature of 'indigenous people' with the legalism of Western environmentalism. A key legal and political philosophy for Gaia is 'Earth Jurisprudence' developed its one-time patron, the late American theologian and cultural historian Thomas Berry. Constituting a rejection of anthropocentric legal systems – and a self-conscious response to deeply reactionary corporate legal activism – this approach involves conferring juristic personhood on 'sacred natural sites and territories, and their customary governance systems'. Since the 1990s, Gaia has worked in the Amazon basin to refine a way to revive what it calls 'community ecological governance'. This concept entails identifying 'indigenous knowledge practices' through 'eco-cultural' documenting and mapping the 'Rights of Nature' as embodied by 'customary laws' and 'customary governance systems', connected to sacred natural sites and their custodians. A tree or a lake, through its custodian, can thereby sue individuals or companies.

The international campaign for 'Rights of Nature', in which Gaia played a key role, took off in the 2000s. The movement has made legal, judicial, and constitutional progress, particularly in central America; articles on the Rights of

[1228] This perspective is unsurprising given that Gaia's funding is partly sourced from the private philanthropic arms of capital, such as the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

Nature were adopted in Ecuador's Constitution in 2008, under the country's first 'indigenous' president Rafael Correa. Gaia was one of 18 organisations from around the world, who came together to form the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature in order to capitalise on this momentum. But Gaia was also steadily developing connections in Africa, largely through the African Biodiversity Network in Kenya. In Uganda, Gaia cultivated a local partner in the form of the Kampala-based NGO, the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE). These organisations' collaboration began with a European Commission-funded 2007 project on indigenous knowledge systems pertaining to 'cultural forests'.

Gaia soon entered the NGO scramble for Buliisa that petroleum had triggered. The organisation was attracted, in particular, to the district's largely forgotten and long-stigmatised complex of sacred clan shrines (the *mpuluma*) and their custodians (the *balegezi* or *balamaansi*) which had been identified during a survey of endangered 'cultural resources' conducted in 2011-2012 by the Bunyoro Kingdom, with co-ordination from NAPE.[1229] In an effort to bring the Rights of Nature to Uganda, from about 2014 Gaia and its local NGO allies increasingly worked with Gungu ritualists like Kagole Margret Byarufu, of Wandyeka sacred natural site in Kisansya.[1230] Together they developed proposals for legal

[1229] Rose Nakayi and Annika Witte, 'Making Cultural Heritage Claims on Profitable Land: The Case of the Ngassa Wells in Uganda's Oil Region', *Africa Spectrum* 54, no. 3 (2019), pp. 222–243.
[1230] National Association of Professional Environmentalists & Gaia Foundation, *Advocating for Recognition and Protection of Water, Food Sovereignty and Sacred Natural Sites and Territories in Uganda`s Oil Region* (Kampala, 2014). The other Ugandan NGOs included African Institute for Culture and Ecology (AFRICE) and Advocates for Natural Resources and Development (ANARDE).

recognition of Gungu right, as 'local custodian community' 'to govern and protect Lake Albert as a sacred lake' – the first in Africa.[1231]

Environmental activism has paid greater legal dividends in Uganda than the indigenous peoples movement that it seeks to galvanise. A 2017 ACHPR resolution resulted from Gaia and its allies' efforts to secure 'Legal Recognition of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories, and their Customary Governance Systems'.[1232] With this momentum, the process of documenting and eco-cultural mapping the Rights of Nature began in Buliisa in November 2018 , ahead of the recognition of the Rights of Nature by Uganda's Parliament in its National Environment Act on 7 March 2019.[1233] November that year witnessed the passing of new ordinances in the Buliisa District Council, formally recognising and protecting sacred natural sites and 'customary laws' of 26 Gungu 'custodial clans', now organised within the new 'custodian clans association'.

[1231] Kagole Margret Byarufu, 'African rural women, custodians of seed and traditional knowledge', *Langscape Magazine* 5, no. 2 (Winter 2016), pp. 43-45; 'A Call for

[1232] Dennis Tabaro, 'The relevance of respecting sacred natural sites', *New Vision*, 23 June 2017.

[1233] Article 4 provides that 'nature has the right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, structure, functions and its processes in evolution', and that 'a person has a right to bring an action before a competent court for any infringement of rights of Nature under this Act'

Figure 36: NAPE, 'Map showing Mpuluma and territories on Lake Mwitanzige' (2019).

It is difficult to predict the consequences of the introduction of these new legal tools in the hands custodians long derided and denigrated, and often lacking formal education. But Gaia's efforts to revalidate the notion of 'indigenous people' in Uganda by this indirect route has had certain immediate effects, and not just in terms of 'naturali[sing] the colonial history of legal personhood'.[1234] The organisation has rendered the lowlands a space of experimentation once more. The laws for which Gaia campaigned have for one thing established intra-ethnic hierarchies, placing the ecological and ritual authority of the 26 'custodial clans', over that of the 56 or so other clans. Perhaps more consequentially, it also officialises and formalises ethno-territorialism by means redolent of colonial-era codification of 'tribal' customary law and ethno-cartography, limiting custodianship of natural sites and, by extension, the encompassing district to people of Gungu ethnicity. As such, the new laws implicitly construct non-Gungu as the primary sources of contamination and corruption.[1235] Activists have used the ideas that structured ethno-civilisational hierarchies to legitimise their ethnic primacy in a hierarchy of claims to belonging and ownership.

Nowhere do the frozen images of such framings do justice to history; but they are rendered a conspicuous mockery by the story of the lowlands. While Buliisa today remains remote – in late 2019 it still lacked an all-weather road – the romanticised, essentialist images deployed in ethnic 'branding' are difficult to square with nostalgic local narratives of 'wild' capitalist extractivism and accumulation by

[1234] Ariel Rawson & Becky Mansfield, 'Producing juridical knowledge: "Rights of Nature" or the naturalization of rights?', *Environment and Planning E* 1, no. 1-2 (2018), pp. 99-119 (100).
[1235] They are not alone in this, among Western conservationists. For example, see International Institute for Sustainable Development, *Migration and conservation in the Lake Albert Ecosystem* (Winnipeg, 2015).

Gungu individuals and ethnically-demarcated corporations enticing and exploiting 'migrant' workers.[1236] But in keeping with Ugandan politics, class is erased from analysis and narrative by discourses on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Rights of Nature. These movements are silent on the political economy of the crisis that produced them.

[1236] For more on ethnic branding, see John L. Comaroff & Jean Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.* (Chicago, 2009).

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Gungu 2a	M	1940	Senior Sec.	03/11	-	-	-
Gungu 3a1, 3b1, 3c1	M	1937	University	02/11	28/02/14	27/11/14	-
Gungu 3a2, 3b2, 3c2,	M	1933	Senior Sec.	02/11	28/02/14	27/11/14	-
Gungu 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d	M	1934	University	02/11	02/07/13	23/11/14	13/05/15
Gungu 5a,5b	M	1927	-	17/11/14	07/05/15	-	-
Gungu 6a, 6b	M	1939	Junior Sec.	17/11/14	08/05/15	-	-
Gungu 7a	M	1937	Junior Sec.	19/11/14	-	-	-
Gungu 8a	M	1950	Junior Sec.	19/11/14	07/05/15	-	-
Gungu 9a	M	1917	-	19/11/14	-	-	-
Gungu 10a	M	1949	Junior Sec.	20/11/14	-	-	-
Gungu 11a	M	1946	Senior Sec.	21/11/14	-	-	-
Gungu 12a	M	1939	Primary	21/11/14	-	-	-
Gungu 13a	F	1956	Senior Sec.	22/11/14	-	-	-
Gungu 14a, 14b, 14c	M	1933	Junior Sec.	27/11/14	11/05/15	03/10/17	-
Gungu 15a, 15b, 15c	F	1940	Junior Sec.	28/02/15	11/05/15	04/10/17	-
Gungu 16a	M	1941	University	28/02/15	-	-	-
Gungu 17a	F	1946	University	20/03/15	-	-	-

Gungu 18a	M	1954	Junior Sec.	06/05/15	-	-	-
Gungu 19a	F	c.1929	-	06/05/15	-	-	-
Gungu 20a	M	1935	Primary	08/05/15	-	-	-
Gungu 21a	M	c.1935	Primary	01/10/17	-	-	-
Gungu 22a	M	1951	University	02/10/17	-	-	-
Gungu 23a	M	1963	University	02/10/17	-	-	-
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Alur 2	M	1934	Primary	04/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 3	M	1936	Primary	04/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 4	M	1945	Primary	05/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 5	M	1943	Primary	05/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 6	M	1936	Primary	06/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 7	F	1950	Primary	06/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 8	M	1955	Primary	07/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 9	M	1947	Primary	09/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 10	M	1937	Primary	09/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 11	M	1937	Primary	09/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 12	M	1938	Primary	10/03/15	-	-	-
Alur 13	M	1940	Primary	10/03/15	-	-	-
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Alur 15	M	-	Primary	11/03/15	-	-	-
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